Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

75¢

GCEA brings message and advocacy to the Legislature. PAGE 2

Five students win PSS Digital Learning Day contest. PAGE 6

MISS MARIANAS BETS

Stellar Marianas president Michelle Sablan, center, joins the 2021 Miss Marianas contestants, from left, Vincent Rabasto, Lilly Carillo, Toremy Diaz, Naomi Lizama, Ha'Ane Eugenio, Bernadette Horey, Richelle Ramon, and Savannah Delos Santos Saturday afternoon at the Hyatt Regency Saipan. The 2021 Miss Marianas Pageant is scheduled for this Saturday, March 13, 2021, at 4pm at the Hyatt Regency Ballroom and will be streamed live on www.facebook.com/stellarmarianas.

ISLAND IMAGE & MOTION

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www.saipantribune.com
www.facebook.com/saipantribune

BOG sues IHOP for breach of contract

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

Bank of Guam is suing the shuttered restaurant IHOP and its owners, two Yumul brothers and another, to collect on $317,238.28 that it claims the restaurant owes on a $578,500 loan that remains unpaid.

The bank, through lawyer Charity R. Hodson, is suing Pacific Pancakes (CNMI) LLC, which does business as IHOP, and its mother company, Pacific Foods (CNMI), LLC, in Superior Court for the NMI for breach of contract.

The lawsuit also names Pacific Foods' owners Ray Anthony N. Yumul, Ralph N. Yumul, and Juan B. Cepeda as defendants in the case, alleging that they failed to and refused to pay the bank a past

See BOG on Page 4

CCC asks for $3.19M budget for FY 2022

CCC officials say to date, IPI paid:

- $170.4M in gross gaming revenue taxes
- $105.5M in exclusive license fees, regulatory fees
- Over $1B in purchase of goods and services from vendors

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Casino Commission is asking the Legislature for a $3.19-million budget for fiscal year 2022, to be used for personnel, operations, and related costs that would enable it to carry out its casino regulatory mandates.

Yeom

Deleon Guerrero

CCC board chair Edward C. Deleon Guerrero and CEC executive director Andrew Yeom said they are asking for just $1 from the general fund pursuant to the Office of Management and Bud-

See CCC on Page 4

Torres anxious for release of $1,400 additional stimulus

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said Monday his administration is anxious to immediately release $1,400 in additional stimulus check payments to each taxpayer once the American Rescue Plan legislation is signed into law and funding is subsequently transferred to the CNMI.

Speaking at a radio news briefing on Monday, Torres said everybody is looking into an update on the U.S. Senate's passage of the American Res-

See TORRES on Page 4

CDC: Fully vaccinated people can gather without masks

By MIKE STOBBE
AP MEDICAL WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Fully vaccinated Americans can gather with other vaccinated people indoors without wearing a mask or social distancing, according to long-awaited guidance from federal health officials.

See CDC on Page 4

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- Orange
- Yellow
- Blue
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

AT A GLANCE

As of 8pm, March 9, 2021

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	7,751	1	7,752
Recovered	7,595	3	7,598
Active	20	1	21
Deaths	133	0	133
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			131,158

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	146	0	146
Traced via Travel Screening	120	0	120
Traced via Community Screening	26	0	26
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			26,131*
Days since last community transmission			203

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Saipan:	Tinian:	Rota:
Dose 1: 10,641	Dose 1: 662	Dose 1: 745
Dose 2: 8,164	Dose 2: 138	Dose 2: 345

*Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CHCC has opted not to report active and recovered cases.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

INSIDE

LOCAL
This Saturday, 2019 Miss Marianas Shannon Sasamoto will pass her crown to the next queen.
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BUSINESS
Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. Saipan will be temporarily closing its doors this Saturday.
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LIFE & STYLE
Prince Harry and Meghan's explosive TV interview reverberates across globe.
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GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

Officials of the Governor's Council of Economic Advisers led by co-chairs Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, back row center, and Jerry Tan, front fourth from right, and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, back row second left, join the House of Representatives members for a group photo after presenting the GCEA's Annual Report and recommendations last month on Capital Hill. GCEA

GCEA brings message and advocacy to the Legislature

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and members of the Governor's Council of Economic Advisers called on the Legislature on Capital Hill yesterday to present the GCEA's 2020 Annual Report and recommendations and thank CNMI stakeholders for the widespread support of the council's economic initiatives and revitalization projects.

This adds to the community outreaches that Torres, co-chair of the GCEA with businessman and community leader Jerry Tan, and council members have done in the past few weeks to present on what the council has achieved thus far. In addition to the Legislature, the council has also met with members of the Marianas Visitors Authority and the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.

The GCEA report analyzes the current economic situation of the CNMI in the aftermath of Super Typhoon Yutu and the devastating COVID-19 pandemic. The council also took steps to identify 13 key economic development initiatives—all taken from the input of community stakeholders—aimed at fast-tracking the CNMI's recovery. The plan aims to transform the islands of Saipan, Rota, and Tinian into world-class destinations while providing a better quality of life for all who call the Marianas home.

"The support that the GCEA has been receiving since its inception in August is overwhelming. I thank our islands' stakeholders: our Senate and House of Representatives, MVA, and the Chamber of Commerce for getting behind this vision for the Commonwealth," said Torres. "It is encouraging to see the unity that this plan has ignited, and I am very pleased to see the CNMI moving forward with our council's recommendations."

Torres created the GCEA through Executive Order 2020-11 to help in the formulation of policy initiatives that would encourage economic growth in the CNMI. The GCEA is made up of experts from the public and private sectors who have answered the call to envision and build a better CNMI for its residents. The organization's mission is to improve the overall quality of life in the Commonwealth through various initiatives designed to improve the CNMI product, rebuild the economy and spur future development in the islands.

PPP initiatives

Out of the 13 initiatives, five were identified as priorities for 2021 through 2022. Torres set the Private Public Partnership campaign as an example of how an initiative can successfully move forward with the community rallying behind it. The PPP welcomes organizations and groups to adopt sites on Saipan, Rota, and Tinian and physically transform them through improvements in infrastructure, design, and maintenance. The PPP started with just six partners and now has 41 groups, representing diverse backgrounds and interests. Thirty local sites, many of which are the CNMI's top tourism sites, have already been adopted. Facilities, such as basketball courts and social halls, have also been spruced up to better serve residents at the village level.

"It's very inspiring to see our community coming together despite the pandemic and typhoons we have faced over the last two years. Our local government, businesses, community organizations, and residents have committed to transforming our islands, protecting our pristine environment, and providing our youth with safe sports and recreational facilities that will make life better for all of us," Torres said.

Streamlining permitting

One of GCEA's recommendations includes the streamlining of the government's permitting processes, which the council noted, currently takes at least three years to complete before large-scale projects can begin. In response, the CNMI Zoning Board, the first in the long line of agencies involved in the permitting process, has agreed to waive the permitting requirement for Federal Emergency Management Agency-funded, typhoon-related projects. This will shave off an estimated three months of processing time.

See GCEA on Next Page

DCRM
SUMMER
INTERNSHIP
COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
The Division of Coastal Resources Management is looking for 15 CNMI-based college students or college-bound high school graduates with an interest in learning more about coral reef and coastal zone management. Our summer interns work 20 hours a week for 10 weeks from June to August and are paid $10.00 per hour.
To be considered, please submit the following documents by email to outreach@dcrm.gov.mp
CNMI EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION
Which can be found at www.cnmiopm.net
COVER LETTER
RESUME/CV
TRANSCRIPTS
Official or Unofficial
TWO (2) LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION
Instructors and/or Employers Only
POLICE CLEARANCE
Within the Last 3 Months
COPY OF VALID PHOTO ID
Driver's License, Passport, etc.
APPLY BY FRIDAY, APRIL 9, 2021
This summer's internship opportunities include:
MARINE MONITORING ◦ EDUCATION & OUTREACH
SHORELINE MONITORING ◦ SPECIAL AREA MANAGEMENT ◦ REGULATORY COMPLIANCE
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ◦ WATERSHED MANAGEMENT
For more information, contact DCRM at
664-8300 or visit our website at WWW.DCRM.GOV.MP
CORAL REEF

Excise tax payment required prior to release of cargo

Taxpayers and their agents in the Commonwealth must pay the excise tax prior to the release of cargo; however, deferred payment is available for qualified importers.

Public Law 21-42 requires that excise tax payment shall be made upon entry and prior to the release of goods, commodities, resources, or merchandise.

There is an exception for qualified importers: an importer must have a CNMI business license for at least two years; a valid tax identification number; a minimum of one-year compliance with Customs import laws and regulations; and a tax clearance from the Division of Revenue & Taxation for a two-year period.

"Applications for approval to qualify as a low-risk importer must be submitted on a form, and will be available through our website and emailed upon request," said Customs Service director Jose C. Mafnas. He adds that any violation of CNMI law or regulation will result in immediate revocation of qualified low-risk importer status.

"This law has been in the works for more than a year, with feedback from members of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce and other stakeholders. I support this because we can work eliminate fly-by-night importers," said Mafnas.

Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig also supports this law. "The 30-day grace period is the current practice and will now be a privileged service accorded to companies that are compliant in the matters of taxation and customs," said Atalig.

Public Law 21-42 was signed into law and becomes effective on May 6. To access the application for tax deferment, visit, https://finance.gov.mp/forms.php or send an email to cnmicustoms@dof.gov.mp. ***(PR)***

Survey: Fishing tournaments help stimulate local economy

By NEIL FAMA
neil_fama@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A recent survey conducted by Tasi to Table showed that the 2019 Saipan International Fishing Tournament and both 2020 and 2021 Wahoo in the Marianas fishing tournaments served as economic drivers in the CNMI economy.

The survey claims that the Saipan International Fishing Tournament in 2019, where off-island participants from Guam and CNMI anglers competed in the two-day event, circulated approximately $150,000 in the economy—car rentals, hotel accommodations, fuel, food and drinks, entertainment, and more.

A similar ripple effect was also observed in the 2nd Annual Wahoo in the Marianas last March 6, the survey states, circulating just over $35,000 in the single-day tournament.

Factors of economic activity include the bulk cost going to fuel purchases for vessels. Food, drinks, and ice also added to the total funds circulated. Fishing equipment servicing, lures, lines, swivels, hooks, sleeves, skirts, etc. directly added to the overall cost spent by each angler. The survey adds that events within the lagoon or offshore fishing account for a good amount of business activity for the Commonwealth.

Mobil and Shell fuel stations pumped out approximately 2,800 gallons of fuel in total, according to the survey—not all of them purchased in one day as most vessels would already have some fuel in their tanks, but possibly over the course of several days to a week. According to TTT's calculations, fuel alone translated to an expense totaling approximately over $12,000 for the one-day tournament.

"WIM 2021 was a great success and it gave back to the community as an economic driver, while also instilling great values with the students who led the tournament. Organizational skills, leadership skills, Marketing & PR and, most importantly, the effort made to work with one another in unity. Will there be a 3rd Annual WIM in 2022? You can be sure that the students, [advisers] and TTT, alongside its sponsors, Mobil Oil Marianas and IT&E, will have it once again!" said TTT spokesman and vice president Wayne Pangelinan.

Students from Marianas High School, Da'ok Academy, Saipan Southern High School, and Kagman High School wish to extend their appreciation to all companies that responded to their solicitation requests. These include Bank of Saipan, Robert T. Torres Law Firm, Pacific Trading Co., Roil Soil Clothing, 4EVER CNMI, Pacific Engineering Group & Services, GR Construction, Fishing Tackle and Sporting Goods, Mercury Marine, Coral Reef Marine Center, Advance Marine Saipan, MARPAC Distributors, Chongs Corp., McDonald's Saipan Corp., EFC Services Group, and JC Development.

GCEA

From Page 2

Another time-saving initiative is to digitize the permitting processes. The Commonwealth Development Authority has approved $100,000 to help fund a system to secure permits.

Sen. Vinnie Sablan (Ind.-Saipan) is working on legislation to support this measure. Sablan proposes to allow permitting agency officials to hold video conferences to avoid delays in decision-making due to the lack of a quorum.

At the House, Rep. Angel Demapan (R-Saipan) has prefiled House Bill 22-21 that would restructure the Commonwealth Development Authority and rename it the Commonwealth Economic Development Authority. This proposed agency would be tasked with leading the CNMI's economic diversification campaign.

Though the CNMI aims to develop other industries that would generate jobs and tax revenues for the Commonwealth, Torres said that tourism remains the backbone of the islands' economies. The CNMI has historical and significant economic and tourism relations with Japan, and GCEA believes this is the right time to re-engage the Japan market as the islands prepare to safely open their borders. The MVA has recently reopened its representative office in Japan in preparation for the resumption of travel tentatively slated for this summer

"There are a lot of moving parts as our islands work toward recovery and implementing these important initiatives. I thank our residents for working together to build a better future for our people," Torres said. ***(PR)***

SAVE THE DATE!

PACIFIC COAST SAFETY FEST

March 22 - 25, 2021

Registration for the classes will open on March 1

FREE OSHA Courses Offered by the Region IX OSHA Training Institute Education Centers:

Arizona State University
California State University - Dominguez Hills
Chabot-Las Positas Community College
University of California San Diego

Schedule:

Monday, March 22:
OSHA Region IX Updates

March 23-25:
Virtual Instructor Led Training (VILT)
OSHA Courses

Course Topics Include (but are not limited to):

- Health Hazard Awareness
- Bloodborne Pathogens
- Pandemic Illness Preparedness
- Fall Hazard Awareness

For more information or to enroll, please visit:
http://pacificsafetyfest.com/

OSHA Training Institute Education Centers
OSHA Region 9
Arizona State University
California State University, Dominguez Hills
Chabot-Las Positas Community College District
University of California San Diego

Pacific Coast Safety Fest

OSHA Occupational Safety and Health Administration

The CNMI OSHA On-Site Consultation program, at the time of initial publication of this document, 02/2021, is funded by a cooperative agreement for $245,900 federal funds, which constitutes 100% of the program budget. 0% of $0 of the program budget, is financed through non-governmental sources.

TECO launches art contest

By NEIL FAMA
neil_fama@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

As part of the celebration of the 42nd anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act, the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Guam is partnering with the government of Guam and the community to organize the Guam & Taiwan: Past, Present, & Future Friendship art drawing contest that invites Guam students to interpret the friendship between Guam and Taiwan.

The theme for the art contest is, "Guam-Taiwan Timeless Friendship."

The dates for artwork submissions will be from March 22 to 31, 2021. The exhibit date is set for April 3-8, 2021. The awards ceremony will be on April 10, 2021, at the Micronesia Mall.

The government partners for the event include the Office of the Governor, Guam Visitors Bureau, Guam Council of the Humanities and Art, University of Guam Endowment Foundation, Guam International Airport, Guam Economic and Development Authority, and Guam Chamber of Commerce.

Corporate sponsors have donated prizes for winners and participants. Prizes include new tablets, laptops, and more. The current corporate sponsors include ASC Trust, Atkins Kroll Toyota, China Airlines, Chen Yi Kuo Insurance Agent, Docomo Pacific, First Commercial Bank, GTA, Guam Animals in Need, Harvest House, Marianas Electronics, Pacific Data Systems, TEMES, and Sanford Technology.

Entries will be exhibited in accordance with the Department of Public Health and Social Services' COVID-19 safety guidelines. For more information, call or send a message to Grace Valencia at 1671-488-7334.

TORRES

From Page 1

cue Plan that the U.S. House of Representatives passed last Saturday.

The U.S. Senate amended the bill before passing it, which means it has been returned to the U.S. House, which is expected to vote on the third stimulus package's final passage this week.

Torres said he spoke to Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig and the Division of Tax and Revenue and both had expressed that they are poised to release the stimulus funds as soon as they get the funding.

"Again, it's not here yet. So, to everybody that's anxious, we are anxious to release that. We don't have the funding yet," said Torres, adding that they don't know when they are going to get the funding.

"But rest assured that the minute we get the green light and notification from the White House, then we will let everybody know."

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) said over the weekend that H.R. 1319, the American Rescue Plan, extends federal unemployment assistance through August 2021, gives each taxpayer an additional $1,400 rebate, and keeps teachers and staff paid so schools can remain open.

Sablan also stated in his e-kilili newsletter that H.R. 1319 includes more money for Marianas food aid and vaccinations, and funds the Commonwealth and municipal governments with an estimated half-billion dollars.

In addition, the delegate said, the Child Tax Credit for families is raised and made monthly, and the Earned Income Tax Credit in the Marianas will permanently be paid by the federal government.

Sablan said no Republicans voted for the American Rescue Plan in the House. He said Republicans attempted to block consideration in the Senate, but Vice President Kamala Harris cast a deciding vote to begin debate.

Sablan said the Senate base bill reduces eligibility for the $1,400 rebate so no individual making more than $80,000 qualifies—a change that should have little impact in the Marianas—and excludes any increase in minimum wage.

He said the Marianas would receive $14.3 million for critical capital projects directly enabling work, education, and health monitoring, including remote options, in response to the pandemic.

He said the estimated half-billion dollars coming to the Marianas as Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds could also be used for investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure, under terms added in the Senate bill.

He said among amendments Republicans put forward are cuts to these funds for U.S. insular areas.

CCC

From Page 1

get's instructions for zero budget increases and $3.19 million from the CCC regulatory fee fund.

Deleon Guerrero and Yeom submitted their budget request last Feb. 26 to Senate President Jude Hofschneider (R-Tinian) and House Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan). They had already submitted an identical copy of the request to the Office of the Governor and OMB pursuant to their Jan. 29, 2021, budget call.

CCC is also asking for 51 full-time employees, the same number as in previous appropriations.

Deleon Guerrero and Yeom also disclosed that, by the end of fiscal year 2020 to date, Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC has paid $170.4 million in gross gaming revenue taxes, spent over $1 billion in the purchase of goods and services from various vendors, and over $105.5 million in payments for the exclusive license fees and casino regulatory fees.

The two CCC officials noted that the casino industry cannot succeed nor operate without the presence of the CCC, which is the enforcement and regulatory entity for the Saipan gaming industry.

Deleon Guerrero and Yeom said they are asking for only $1 from local funding source just to keep this account from being deleted. The remaining $3,191,060, while still requiring legislative appropriations, is actually earmarked for the CCC as per law.

Deleon Guerrero and Yeom said that Public Law 19-24, as amended by P.L. 21-38, earmarked $3,150,000 from IPI and $41,060 has already been received from gaming and non-gaming vendors that required casino licensure or registration. Both of these funds are classified as CCC regulatory fee funds.

CCC received its status as a full autonomous agency only last January when Gov. Ralph DLG Torres signed Public Law 21-38, and all of their procurement and personnel processing are still being handled by the Department of Finance through a memorandum of agreement.

Under Public Law 21-38, CCC, and not the Finance secretary, shall establish and maintain a CCC regulatory fee fund to be kept separate and apart from the general fund of the government.

The new law provides that, as an autonomous agency, CCC shall determine its staffing levels for full-time, part-time, seasonal, and temporary employees.

The new law also gives, among other things, CCC the authority to issue a casino license.

CDC

From Page 1

The recommendations also say that vaccinated people can come together in the same way—in a single household—with people considered at low-risk for severe disease, such as in the case of vaccinated grandparents visiting healthy children and grandchildren.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced the guidance Monday.

The guidance is designed to address a growing demand, as more adults have been getting vaccinated and wondering if it gives them greater freedom to visit family members, travel, or do other things like they did before the COVID-19 pandemic swept the world last year.

"With more and more people vaccinated each day, we are starting to turn a corner," said CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky.

During a press briefing Monday, she called the guidance a "first step" toward restoring normalcy in how people come together. She said more activities would be ok'd for vaccinated individuals once caseloads and deaths decline, more Americans are vaccinated, and as more science emerges on the ability of those who have been vaccinated to get and spread the virus.

The CDC is continuing to recommend that fully vaccinated people still wear well-fitted masks, avoid large gatherings, and physically distance themselves from others when out in public. The CDC also advised vaccinated people to get tested if they develop symptoms that could be related to COVID-19.

The CDC guidance did not speak to people who may have gained some level of immunity from being infected, and recovering from, the coronavirus.

Officials say a person is considered fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving the last required dose of vaccine.

BOG

From Page 1

due amount of $317,238.28 as of March 1, 2021.

Hodson said that Pacific Pancakes has been retaining the principal balance, accrued interest, and late fees in the amount of $317,238.28.

BOG, through Hodson, wants the court to issue an order granting them relief of the principal amount of $253,848.65, a pre-judgment interest of $54,632.97, and late charges of $8,756.96, all totaling $317,238.28 that is allegedly owed by Pacific Pancakes.

In addition, BOG wants post-judgment relief from the day the judgment is imposed and attorney's fees.

As for Pacific Foods and its owners— Ray Anthony N. Yumul, Ralph N. Yumul, and Cepeda—BOG, through Hodson, wants the court to issue an order granting a collective relief of $302,433.57, saying that Pacific Foods breached its commercial guaranty by refusing to pay the bank its share of the guaranty.

Because of late payments, BOG issued a notice of default and demand to the guarantors for payment. Ray Anthony N. Yumul was served on Oct. 14, 2020, while Cepeda and Ralph N. Yumul were served on Oct. 7, 2020.

BOG also issued a notice of default and demand for payment to IHOP, which was sent via certified mail, return receipt requested, to the mailing address provided in the loan.

Despite BOG's demand for payment, Pacific Pancakes has failed to pay their share of indebtedness. Hodson said that BOG has performed all of its obligations under the loan and other related agreements, including the revision agreements and each commercial guaranty.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

■ Jan. 22, 2016, Pacific Pancakes took out a $578,500 loan from Bank of Guam and agreed to make a monthly installment payment of $8,404.90 until the loan is paid off, which is June 25, 2023. If Pacific Pancakes fails to make payment 10 days after their due date of the installment payment, a 5% interest on the unpaid portion would be imposed.

■ On Jan. 22, 2016, BOG entered into a Cash Collateral Deposit Agreement with the CNMI Department of Commerce (first deposit agreement) which provided that the Department of Commerce pledged cash collateral to BOG under the DOC CNMI State Small Business Credit Initiative-Collateral Support Program because Pacific Pancakes desired to obtain a loan from the bank to purchase equipment, furniture, and fixtures for the establishment.

■ On June 23, 2016, a second deposit agreement totaling $175,000 was entered between BOG and Pacific Pancakes a little after because Pacific Pancakes needed additional leasehold improvements and to purchase equipment, furniture, and fixtures for the project planned for with the Pacific Pancakes' original loan with BOG.

■ On March 2018, Pacific Foods purchased Pacific Pancakes.

■ On or about March 16, 2018, Ralph N. Yumul, Ray N. Yumul, and Juan B. Cepeda guaranteed the loan by signing a commercial guaranty with BOG for half of the principal amount, or $302,433.57, and acknowledged that they are members of Pacific Foods. All agreed to pay all the bank's cost, including attorney's fees and expenses incurred in connection with the commercial guaranty.

■ On or about March 16, 2018, Pacific Foods guaranteed the loan by executing a Commercial Guaranty with the bank for half of the principal amount, or $302,433.57.

■ In March 2018, Pacific Foods guaranteed the loan by executing a commercial guaranty with BOG for half of the principal amount of $302,433.57 when Pacific Foods purchased Pacific Pancakes. Under the commercial guaranty, all three owners of Pacific Foods agreed to pay all the bank's costs including attorney's fees.

■ Pacific Pancakes fell behind its payments and BOG issued notices of default to them on or about April 25, 2018, May 26, 2018, June 26, 2018, July 26, 2018, Aug. 25, 2018, and Sept. 5, 2018.

■ On Nov. 9, 2018, Pacific Pancakes and BOG entered into a revision agreement under the loan in which Pacific Pancakes would pay the loan in three payments of interest only from Dec. 25, 2018, and every 25th after that.

■ Pacific Pancakes would have to pay 55 consecutive monthly payments of $10,946.19 from July 25, 2019 to Feb. 25, 2024.

■ Pacific Pancakes, again, fell behind its payments and the bank issued a notice of default on May 28, 2019, June 25, 2019, Aug. 27, 2019, Oct. 24, 2019, and Nov. 23, 2019.

■ From Feb. 7, 2020, to August 2020, the bank took possession of all of Pacific Pancakes collateralized business assets—including kitchen equipment fixtures, restaurant furniture, inventory, and supplies—and sold them at an auction to the highest bidder for $44,000, the proceeds of which were applied to the loan account as a principal reduction on June 25, 2020.

■ On July 25, 2020, BOG forwarded this matter to legal counsel for collection.

■ On Oct. 7, 2020, Ralph N. Yumul and Juan B. Cepeda were served.

■ On Oct. 14, 2020, Ray N. Yumul was served.

‘FEMA has obligated $22.89M to the NMI for COVID-19 response efforts’

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has obligated $22.89 million to the CNMI for its COVID-19 response efforts, according to FEMA Region IX external affairs officer Veronica Verde yesterday.

“FEMA has been working very hard to ensure CNMI is reimbursed as soon as possible for costs related to the pandemic and previous disaster costs,” said Verde in an email in response to *Saipan Tribune*’s request for clarification.

Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig earlier stated that the CNMI government has already spent $29.7 million for its COVID-19 response effort.

Verde said the difference in costs versus reimbursements to date reflect some reimbursements that are still in process and some cost-share adjustments that remain pending.

Verde emailed *Saipan Tribune* last week, stating that the amount ($82.3 million) in the Feb. 26 news story that quoted Atalig does not accurately reflect the disaster declaration described in the article.

Last Feb. 23, Atalig testified before the House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means that FEMA has reimbursed $10.1 million so far of the CNMI’s running balance for the COVID-19 response expenses of $82.3 million.

Atalig said that in the first quarter of fiscal year 2021 alone, of the CNMI’s $10.1 million expense, they were reimbursed just $8.1 million.

But Verde said the numbers quoted ($82.3 million) are incorrect as far as dollars awarded to date for the CNMI’s COVID-19 response. “For COVID DR-4511 requested to date is $29.7 million, obligated to date is $22.899 million,” Verde said. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Kilili announces 2021 Marianas Congressional Art Competition

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) invites high school students in the Northern Mariana Islands to participate in the 13th annual Congressional Art Competition for a chance to have their artwork publicly displayed at the U.S. Capitol for one year.

“Since the competition began in 2009, millions of people have seen the acclaimed work of the Northern Marianas’ talented young artists,” Sablan said. “I encourage students to showcase their work to the world and discover something new about themselves along the way.”

The art competition is free and open to all high school students. Students have until Friday, April 23, 2021, to submit their artwork via an electronic form link on Sablan’s website.

Congressional Art Competition rules require that submitted artwork be original, two-dimensional works. Eligible artwork includes paintings, drawings, collages, prints, mixed media art, computer-generated art, and photography. Artwork must also be suitable for public display.

This year’s submissions will be judged based on originality, technical difficulty, creativity, communication, effectiveness, and overall appearance. A panel of local artists will select the winning entry.

Aside from having their work displayed in the Capitol, the winner will also be invited to the national reception, usually held in Washington D.C.

Contest guidelines and student release forms are available at https://sablan.house.gov/serving-you/art-competition. For more information, contact the congressional office at (670) 323-2647 or Kilili@mail.house.gov. ***(PR)***

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Division of Coastal Resources Management
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Director, DCRM

NOTICE

PUBLIC HEARING FOR ROUTE 35 ROAD IMPROVEMENT (CHALAN TUN HERMAN PAN-AIRPORT ROAD) COASTAL PERMIT NO. SMS-2000-X-142-A1

POSTPONED

The Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM) hereby informs the general public that the public hearing for the proposed road improvements of the Route 35 Road (Chalan Tun Herman Pan/Airport Road) has been postponed until further notice.

The Department of Public Works (DPW) is proposing to improve the Route 35 (Tun Herman Pan) Road which includes hazard elimination such as inclusion of guardrail, traffic signs and drainage improvements and pavement rehabilitation. Route 35 is a two-lane undivided roadway along the 0.78-mile length beginning from the Route 31 (Chalan Msgr. Guerrero) and Route 35 (Chalan Tun Herman Pan) intersection and ending at the intersection of Route 304 (Flame Road) and Route 35 (Chalan Tun Herman Pan).

Written comments can still be submitted by mail to the Division of Coastal Resources Management, P.O. Box 501304, sent by fax to 664-8315, or emailed to permitting@dcrm.gov.mp. The project files are open and can be reviewed by scheduling an appointment with DCRM. All written and oral comments received by DCRM will be included as part of the permit application records and will be considered in any decisions concerning the proposed projects. Please contact the DCRM at 664-8300 if you have any questions or would like to learn more about the Route 35 Road Improvement project.

/s/ JANICE E. CASTRO
Director
Division of Coastal Resources Management

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Five students win PSS Digital Learning Day contest

Five students from private and public schools were named winners of the 2021 Digital Learning Day competition of the Public School System in a special ceremony last Friday, March 5, at the Aqua Resort Club.

For the Early Elementary Level (Kindergarten to Grade 2), Candice Trasmano, a second-grade student at Golden Harvest International School, won the top prize. She submitted a short essay on "how technology helps me learn."

Sinapalo Elementary School 4th grade student Jasmine Coleen Yalung won the elementary level (3rd-5th Grade category). She submitted a multimedia presentation on how technology helps her succeed in learning.

Philip Megino was the winner for the middle school level. He submitted a video poetry on the importance of technology in learning.

There were two winners for the high school category: Jermaine Chloe Yalung, a 10th-Grader from Dr. Rita H. Inos Jr. Sr. High School, and Patricia Ann Castillon, an 11th-Grader from Marianas High School. Their individual multimedia production entry on "What is a 21st Century Learner" won them the award.

Digital Learning Day was launched by the school district in 2012. Dr. Bobby James Cruz, PSS director of instructional technology, explained that Digital Learning Day "showcases the integration of technology in learning throughout the CNMI."

Lorraine Catienza, program manager for the school district's distance education, said the competition was also created to support and enhance the role of teachers in classrooms, and promote the effective use of modern tools to improve the learning experience for CNMI students. ***(PR)***

Jasmine Yalung of Sinapalo Elementary School is the winner for the 3rd-5th Grade level category. The Sinapalo Elementary School student is joined by family, classroom teacher, school principal Daisy Quitugua, Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred B. Ada, Board of Education chair Andrew L. Orsini, and BOW vice chair Herman Atalig. PSS

Tanapag Middle School student Philip Megino beams after winning the middle school category. He is joined here by his mother, school principal Hilda Rios, Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada, Board of Education chair Andrew L. Orsini, BOE vice chair Herman Atalig, and associate commissioner for Administrative Services Eric Magofna. PSS

Candice Trasmano of Golden Harvest, who is the winner for the K-Grade 2 level, poses with her parents, Dr. Bobby Cruz, director of Instructional Technology; and Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred B. Ada. PSS

Dr. Rita H. Inos Jr. Sr. High School's Jermaine Chloe Yalung explains her winning multimedia presentation in the high school category. PSS

Patricia Ann Catillon of Marianas High School talks about her winning video presentation for the high school category. PSS

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS LICENSING BOARD
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Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950
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Website: cnmibpl-hcplb.net

Pursuant to P.L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Health Care Professions Licensing Board (HCPLB) are hereby giving notice that it will hold its regular monthly board meeting on ***Thursday, March 11, 2021 at 8am*** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the Administration Building, Governor's Conference Room on Capitol Hill.

AGENDA

I. Meeting Call to Order
II. Determination of Quorum
III. Review and Adoption of Agenda
IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes (02/10/2021)
V. Public Comments
VI. Chairperson's Report
A. Propose amendments to the Pharmacy regulation
VII. Director's Report
A. Update on the amendment to P.L. 15-105 – Removal of Limited Terms for HCPLB
VIII. Investigator's Report
IX. Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
A. Governor's Office
B. Legislature
X. Old Business
A. Opioid Bills
1. SB 21 – Medical Assistance
2. SB 21 – Good Samaritan Act
3. SB 21 – CNMI Drug Overdose Policy
B. § 140-50.3-4700 – Psychology
C. § 140-50.3-4900 – Addiction Professionals
XI. New Business
XII. Pending Applications for Board's Review
A. New Application
1. Gail Labatete - SCW
B. Renewal Applications
XIII. Miscellaneous Business
XIV. Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
XV. Announcements
A. Next Meeting Date
B. Adjournment of Meeting

Northern Marianas College
Procurement and Property Management
P.O. Box 501250 • Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A.
Phone: (670) 237-6824
www.marianas.edu

CONSULTING SERVICES
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
NMC RFP 21-001

Northern Marianas College (The College) is soliciting competitive sealed Proposals for the Consulting Services for the Aquaculture Parks, Saipan, Tinian and Rota projects.

Specifications and Scope of Work packets may be picked up at the **NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. P, commencing February 08, 2021 between the hours of 9:00-11:30 a.m.** for the Electronic packet, please send request to Anita Camacho (anita.camacho@marianas.edu).

Pre-Proposal conference is scheduled for February 17, 2021 09:00am. attendance is strongly recommended. NMC continues to practice social distancing due to the ongoing COVID 19 restrictions. The pre-proposal conference will take place through video conference technology, Zoom. Zoom ID No.: 939 6768 1365.

Electronic Proposal submission:
NMCRFP21-001@marianas.edu
Due Date/Time: 4:00 pm, March 11, 2021, (CNMI).

Sealed Proposal, hard copies submission:
Procurement & Property Management Office, Bldg. P, As Terlaje Campus
Due Date and Time: 4:00pm, March 11, 2021, (CNMI).

Paid for by 100% Federal Funds through USDA-NIFA, authorized under the Smith Lever Act Section 3b & 3c award# 2017-41100.

In accordance with Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, Local Preference is not available to local businesses for this procurement.

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The College reserves the right to reject any and/or all bids for any reason and waive any defect in said bids, or cancel in part or its entirety this IFB, if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College.

Approved by:

/s/ Anita Camacho
Procurement & Property Manager

Paid for by 100% Federal Funds through USDA-NIFA, authorized under the Smith Lever Act Section 3b & 3c award# 2017-41100 and the Hatch Act as amended August 11, 1955, award #2019-31100 (Regular).

The Northern Marianas College is a Land Grant Institution accredited by the Senior College and University Commission of the Western Association for Schools and Colleges.

2019 Miss Marianas Shannon Sasamoto: Inspiring positivity

This Saturday, 2019 Miss Marianas Shannon Sasamoto will pass her crown to the next queen after a flurry of local and international activities and events.

The young queen has been quite busy since her crowning in July 2019, becoming one of the most active and inspiring titleholders for the Marianas despite the challenges of a global pandemic.

While she attended many local events and activities, her first major community project was working closely with the NMI Girl Scouts and helping launch the first cookie program on the islands—a program designed to help young girls become leaders and entrepreneurs.

Then she was off to the Miss International pageant in Tokyo, Japan, where she shone on stage, presenting the first locally and personally designed evening gown on the global platform.

"We were most proud to work with her and help her bring her own design to the international stage. She performed beautifully and represented our islands well," said Stellar Marianas president Michelle Sablan.

Sasamoto used her creativity to sew 200 masks for the "The Guardian Mask Project," an initiative with Rep. Sheila Babauta, as well as present the first video tutorial series on local art and culture with the assistance of a grant from the NMI Humanities Council.

Sasamoto also hosted the first national costume contest and handed out three creative awards.

With schools suspended, Sasamoto also read books to kids through an online video series: *Wings Within, One Voice, and It Feels Good to be Yourself.*

She also attended the Ride for Pride, a motorcade organized by Pride Marianas and Pride Marianas Youth.

Soon after, she hosted one session for NMC's 4-H Camp Maga'lahi, called "Can You Be-Weave It?" Sharing the art of weaving she learned at home during quarantine, she taught 56 participants ranging from 7-19 years old how to weave a small fish and a rose. She created two weaving videos uploaded on the Stellar Marianas YouTube page, where she weaves a hat and rose.

Hailing from San Roque on Saipan, Sasamoto partnered once again with Babauta and the NMI Humanities Council to create a community garden at the Tanapag Youth Center called "Hope Garden."

2019 Miss Marianas Shannon Sasamoto prepares to wrap up her reign and pass on her crown this Saturday at the 2021 Miss Marianas Pageant. Livestreaming will be on www.facebook/stellarmarianas.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The young queen also took part in the "Hailigi Pole Project," headed by the Lady Diann Torres Foundation to paint a power pole with her sister across the Cabrera Center.

Shannon also thanked PBS for reaching out to her to be a part of the American Portrait project where she shared the traditions she carries on and raised to believe in. "If you want to view these videos or share your story, visit their website to further represent the CNMI. Our stories deserve to be heard, she pointed out.

Sasamoto was a panelist on a Northern Marianas College webinar focused on the theme "Where do we go from here?" to join in discussions concerning topics that include: Future Outlook; Finding Financial Stability at a time of Crisis; Survivor's Resources; and Community Opportunities.

She also attended the DVAM Motorcade hosted by @endviolencenmi and Triple J Motors in a show of support against domestic violence.

As part of the NMI Humanities Council grant focused on sharing local culture and literacy, Shannon created videos sharing how to make coconut oil and coconut candy at Triple J's Surf Rider Hotel.

With the help of an NMI Humanities grant and local artist Momoko Halstead, Sasamoto created the islands' first native crown, adorned with *Spondylus* and other shells two crowns. She made two: one for her and the future queen, who is expected to be crowned this Saturday. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-21-020

Installation of Sludge Dewatering Equipment

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Installation of Sludge Dewatering Equipment in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The intent of the contract is for the Contractor to provide all labor, equipment, supplies and materials necessary to complete the scope of work which consists of; installation of sludge dewatering equipment including the screw press skid (OFCI) for full function. The work shall include; selective demolition of existing improvements, the installation of sludge dewatering units (OFCI), shaftless auger conveyor (OFCI), installation of pressure pumps, installation of water storage tanks, and rehabilitation and modification of existing improvements, along with other miscellaneous features, for one unit at Sadog Tasi Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and one unit at Agingan WWTP. The work shall be completed with minimal disruption to the daily operation of the Sadog Tasi WWTP and Agingan WWTP. CUC requires the Project to be completed in 180 calendar days from date of award of contract.

The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, oeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of **$100.00** (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **March 9, 2021 at 10:00 AM** (ChST) at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) copies of the bid must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-21-020, Installation of Sludge Dewatering Equipment" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on March 29, 2021, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of not less than fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the Unites States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. A *Payment Bond* of one Hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on March 16, 2021 to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Westen Knudsen, CUC Water/Wastewater Engineer via email address westen.knudsen@cucgov.org and to Marcela Tenorio, P&S, Senior Administrative Technician - marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES
CUC-RAES-21-010

A&E Design Services for the Agingan Wastewater Treatment Upgrade (S18-065a)

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified Architectural and Engineering (A&E) firms for the Design Services of the Agingan Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade in Agingan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Proposers for this project must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The RAES package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 for one package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies of the Proposal and One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies of the Cost Proposal in a separate envelope must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-RAES-21-010, A&E Design Services for Agingan Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade"**, to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on March 11, 2021. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.**

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers who submit proposal determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. All proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from the proposal submitted by competing proposers.

All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the proposers due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Consultant's preparation of a proposal under the contract. The RAES does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the statement of qualifications under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Consultants are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RAES and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 22, 2021** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email – manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Mr. Larry Manacop, CUC Water/Wastewater, Acting Chief Engineer – via email larry.manacop@cucgov.org; Westen Knudsen, Water/Wastewater Engineer – via email westen.knudsen@cucgov.org and Ms. Christie L. Sablan, Administrative Technician Senior – via email christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the proposal in the best interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Opinion

Hafa Adai
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EDITORIAL

Google renounces web tracking, but protecting privacy will take much more

The commercial internet developed with so little regard for privacy, tech companies have been able to turn personal data into hefty profits, raising billions of dollars off their ability to collect and sell information about anyone who strayed within hailing distance of their software. Last week, Google announced a step in the right direction—but not a giant step, nor one that will stop Google from continuing to hoover up immense amounts of personal data.

At issue is how online companies track internet users as they browse from site to site online, typically through snippets of code known as cookies. The most noxious version, "third-party" cookies, is the web equivalent of a company posting sentinels across the internet to surveil what you do even when you're on other companies' sites.

Google declared in a blog post Wednesday that it would no longer use or support third-party cookies, nor would it create or use any other technology that tracks individual users across the web. Given that Google is a main supplier of online advertising technology, its change in approach will ripple far and wide.

That's welcome news, albeit with caveats galore. As Lee Tien of the Electronic Frontier Foundation noted, third-party cookies were already on the retreat, with Apple and other makers of popular web browsers moving to block them. Meanwhile, Google, Facebook and other Big Tech companies continue to collect personal information in abundance from people who use their sites and services through first-party cookies and similar techniques.

The concerns about personal data collection are the same whether it's being collected through first-party or third-party techniques, said Michelle Richardson of the Center for Democracy and Technology: Companies may use the information to discriminate among internet users, offering different goods, services and even prices to different users.

Instead of helping advertisers track individuals, Google says, it is refining a technology that assigns users anonymously to large groups with common interests. That's an improvement, even though it too may be vulnerable to abuse. But why do any form of tracking at all? Privacy advocates say pitches can be targeted effectively by basing them on where the user is at the moment (contextual advertising), not where he or she has roamed previously online (behavioral advertising).

Ultimately, legislators are going to have to enact protections giving people far more control over whether and how personal information is used online. Ideally the federal government will set a strong floor under online privacy protections, but until then it will be up to state lawmakers or voters to act, as this state has done with its groundbreaking online privacy laws. It's good to see Google move the ball forward, but there's much further to go.

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Google puts lid on cookie jar and ends an internet era

By TIMOTHY L. O'BRIEN
Bloomberg News

Timothy L. O'Brien is a senior columnist for Bloomberg Opinion.

The cookie is dead. Long live the cookie.

Google, the internet search giant, said last week that it's done tracking us as we skate around the web. It promises that after fully eliminating its use of third-party cookies over the next year, it won't adopt replacements that essentially do the same thing.

That doesn't mean Google won't continue scooping up first-party information it collects directly from users when they visit sites and services it controls. It also doesn't mean that all of the machinery elsewhere that identifies the web's denizens and serves them ads and other solicitations tailored to their specific interests is going to evaporate.

But it does mean that a very particular and early chapter in the internet era is coming to an end. That era was defined by computer-based web browsers made potent by a number of innovations, with cookies being, perhaps, first among equals. Cookies allowed a browser to remember its users, making the web much easier to navigate. They also helped popularize and commercialize the web, ultimately spawning, alas, a universe in which personal privacy was easily compromised and the same ad for beautiful leather boots, pop-ups, notifications and other flotsam clung to users wherever they went.

Lou Montulli, a computer programmer working for an obscure startup, Netscape Communications Corp., invented cookies in 1994. He named them after "magic cookies" deployed by data scientists to perform routine computer operations, and his blog offers a clearheaded justification for them.

Without cookies, "each time a user clicked to move to a different page they would become just another random user with no way to associate them with an action they had done just moments ago," he writes. "This is a bit like talking to someone with Alzheimer's disease. Each interaction would result in having to introduce yourself again, and again, and again."

Netscape's browser, available to anyone with a PC, was a sensation when it debuted, and it effectively marked the beginning of the internet era. Within a couple of years, first-party cookies had morphed into third-party cookies, and companies such as DoubleClick (which Google later acquired) were using them to serve ads to users wherever they went. They also allowed companies to snatch people's data without their permission and turn around and sell it. Privacy concerns soared, and such was Montulli's power at the time that a decision about disabling third-party cookies was left to him.

Montulli opted to leave them in place, convinced that their presence was as transparent and manageable as possible. If cookies were uprooted, advertisers would find new tools to accomplish the same thing and, he writes, "we would be trading out one problem for another."

The decades that followed saw an innovative boom in ubiquitous and nearly unavoidable digital advertising, with retail, publishing, entertainment and communications titans dislodged or reinvented along the way. As my Bloomberg Opinion colleague Alex Webb noted last week, much of the internet was only "free" because the advertising gold mine paved the way—while users, through cookies, turned over valuable boatloads of detailed information about themselves.

Google emerged as a colossus in that world until the social media revolution turned Facebook into a viable competitor. Google and Facebook jointly inhaled nearly three-quarters of the $300 billion spent on web advertising in 2020, according to the World Advertising Research Council. Now, with regulators worldwide cracking down on Google, Facebook and other tech giants over privacy concerns and anticompetitive behavior, the cookie has landed on the chopping block.

Technological change also fueled the cookie's demise. Consumers have spent years flocking to mobile devices and apps, which don't accommodate web-based cookie-tracking as effectively as desktop computers once did. Apple's Safari browser and Mozilla's Firefox browser already have default settings that block third-party cookies, so Google will be playing catch-up by embracing more of the same on its Chrome browser. Still, it's a seismic event when the company that blossomed because of cookie-driven advertising revenue decides to call it quits.

Google also doesn't appear to be worried that its business model is threatened. Marketers have been bracing for this moment for years and have already developed alternatives to cookies that will allow them to continue tracking how people journey around the web—albeit with less specifics about what each individual is up to across a multitude of sites. Google has already developed digital tools as part of a "privacy sandbox"

See GOOGLE on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Meghan and Harry launch their royal spinoff

By ALEX WEBB
BLOOMBERG OPINION

In the end, the royal demerger got what it needed. Prince Harry and Meghan Markle set about forging their own brand identity while stopping short of destroying the parent company.

The couple's interview with Oprah Winfrey, broadcast on CBS on Sunday evening in the U.S., was always going to be a risky affair. Not because Oprah would ask them particularly hard-hitting questions, but because criticizing individual members of the British royal family would risk a backlash—one that would be harder for Harry and Meghan to endure in their new roles. We'll learn over the next few days whether their comments about Prince Charles temporarily not answering Harry's calls or an unidentified individual asking about the baby's skin color will yield repercussions from Buckingham Palace.

The couple's joint brand is now far more important to their livelihoods than it was when they were working royals. It's the brand, after all, that has secured deals for their production company Archewell Inc. with Netflix Inc. and Spotify Technologies Inc., not any track record as producers.

Their prospects function much like any corporate demerger. The new company has to ensure it sets enough distance between itself and the parent company to justify why it was spun out to begin with. But it must also be careful not to ruin its erstwhile parent, since the reputations of the two retain at least some degree of codependence.

And, of course, a spinoff almost always increases volatility. Freeing a standalone company from the strictures of an overbearing headquarters can certainly lead to better performance. But without the shelter of the larger parent company, it will also suffer more from any competitive pressures and reputational damage.

There are parallels with the situation in which the Duke and Duchess of Sussex find themselves. As an independent entity, Harry and Meghan now have more autonomy but they're also more vulnerable. Their livelihood depends on their brand, so they stand to lose more from any public spat than the monarchy as an institution does. The royals have always been more resilient together than apart.

The vulnerability is laid bare when you consider how the function of the royals is perceived in the U.S. compared with the U.K. For many on the westerly side of the Atlantic, the family appears to be little more than turbocharged celebrities, gracing the Netflix screen and the covers of society and gossip magazines. But in the U.K., the Queen is our head of state—constitutionally, she is the literal personification of the state. The crown is above politics and above fame.

Meghan acknowledged that she initially failed to recognize that discrepancy. Growing up in Los Angeles, she thought she understood celebrity, but the monarchy was "a completely different ball game," she said.

The Oprah interview shows that Harry and Meghan have made the transition: As the royals of streaming platforms, their value now resides in the sanctity of their brand, rather than in the institution they left. And Sunday's interview seems to have strengthened that brand in the U.S., where their financial future lies. But there's a long road ahead.

Alex Webb is a Bloomberg Opinion *columnist covering Europe's technology, media and communications industries. He previously covered Apple and other technology companies for Bloomberg News in San Francisco.*

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey aka Pepe Batbon is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.

COVID Air and the Angel's Share

The Metamorphoses of COVID

"…the air was without splendor:
no thing maintained its shape; all were at war;
in one same body cold and hot would battle;
the damp contended with the dry, things hard
with soft, and weighty things with weightless
parts."
—from *The Metamorphoses* of Ovid, a Roman poet (43 B.C.- A.D. 17).

I have now had my second COVID vaccine shot
yet fear continues with almost every news release
it lingers in my head whether I like it or not
still wearing a mask and distancing give no peace.

Coronavirus mutations enter in our blood
invisible enemies cross through airport gates
from So. Africa, Brazil, U.K. come in a flood
some more deadly than others such is our fate.

Scientists work constantly to stop these variants
time needed testing for strength and efficacy
data examined by CDC for usage and clearance
for length of immunity we must wait and see.

COVID now metamorphs across the land and sea
killing some and causing anxiety for you and me.

About the Angel's Share, Devils May Care

20% of a barrel of whiskey is lost to evaporation of spirits
distillers call this loss of precious liquid 'the angel's share'
hope holds out that the distillation process has its merits
devils and other spirits hearing about this said just not fair.

Those devils be damned they want a share of at least 15%
how the hell they will get it I don't really know or care
perhaps it will come down a pipeline of pity heaven sent
guarantee they will wolf it down in a purgatory pub chair.

Next the leprechauns spoke up that crafty old bunch
those Irish spirits wanted a share of spirits around 10%
to have on a daily basis when they sat down to lunch
or celebrate charms and tricks meant with good intent.

Duendes from the islands of Rota, Tinian, and Saipan
want 5% to mix together with tuba wine is their plan.

The feud for which there is no truce? The saga of old Dr. Seuss

By MARY SCHMICH
Chicago Tribune

Mary Schmich is a columnist for the Chicago Tribune *and winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for commentary.*

I'll tell you, kids, what I would do
If I were queen and ran the zoo!
If I controlled the whole dang show
Hoo boy the places I would go!
.
I'd make the virus vanish now!
I'd kill that villain–oof! kapow!
And if I were the lady king?
I'd turn the winter into spring!
.
And then I'd hop upon a plane
To Mali, China or Bahrain!
I'd go to England, go to France
I'd go there in my underpants!
.
I'm kidding, kids, and I digress
Those aren't the things we must address
The biggest issue on the globe?
The one we must dissect and probe?
.
The thing that's set the world on fire?
The thing that's got us in the mire?
The feud for which there is no truce?
The saga of old Dr. Seuss.
.
First, let's review this frightful fight
That's stoked the war of left and right
The truth begins with his estate –
They said not all his works are great.
.
They did not mean that Christmas grinch
Whose face is in a constant pinch
They did not cite that rhyming cat
The one who wears the giant hat.
.
They did not mean green eggs and ham
–
I'm getting to my point, I am! –
They said that they'll no longer print
Six books for which they now repent.
.
Six books that stigmatize some folks
That turn them into types and jokes
Six books of which you'd never heard!
Of which you could not quote a word!
.
They said those books can cause
real pain
And still the right wing must complain!
They say that there's no racist harm
They shake their fists with faux alarm!
.
Cry, "Cancel culture's run amok!
"The woke folk really, truly suck!
"They'll take our guns, they'll take our books!
"They're fascists! Vandals! Left-wing crooks!"
.
But, kids, I'm here to give the facts
Those books, they do not face the ax
They are not victims of a purge
So let us stop the free-speech dirge.
.
They've not been hid with keys
and locks!
No matter what you hear from Fox!
No, no one took them from
your house!
No matter how the Fox folks grouse!
No, no one took them from your car!
They did not take them from your bar!
They did not take them from the shops!
They did not send the cancel cops!
So stop this phony moan and scare
They did not ban them anywhere!
.
Those books weren't burned! They weren't destroyed!
So why are some folks so annoyed?
Because they like performing rage
Upon the "cancel culture" stage.
.
You'd think that there's no other news
No other cause to blow a fuse
No climate change, no needy poor
(The real news can be such a bore.)
.
Evictions! Health care? COVID dead?
Let's talk about Potato Head!
You heard that he's been canceled too?
Well, kids, that simply isn't true.
.
Besides, this feud is good for biz
It really, truly, sadly is!
Those books are selling very fast
Much quicker than in all the past.
.
And as for Seuss, his work lives on
The best of Seuss is far from gone
But times they change, and so must we
The more we live, the more we see.
.
We see some books can harm and hurt
In subtle ways and more overt
And books that once seemed A-OK
Look different in a newer day.
.
His work is from a different time
He did not mean it as a crime
But in this time there's no excuse
For certain books by Dr. Seuss.

GOOGLE

From Page 8

that serves ads targeted at like-minded groups of people rather than individuals.

As Bloomberg Intelligence analysts have also noted, newfangled artificial intelligence technologies and enhancements in machine learning are likely to continue to make ad targeting precise and lucrative. Companies that don't embrace AI "risk extinction," the analysts pointed out. So don't expect Google to sit this one out. It has alternatives for delivering targeted ads, and instead of pursuing that lucre like a nefarious stalker, it's likely to do so more anonymously. And its first-party data, the information it still vacuums up when users employ its products, is likely to become more valuable as third-party data sources shrivel.

"People shouldn't have to accept being tracked across the web in order to get the benefits of relevant advertising," wrote David Temkin, a Google executive, when his company announced it would find alternatives to digital ankle bracelets. "And advertisers don't need to track individual consumers across the web to get the performance benefits of digital advertising."So the way users are tracked will change, but it's not clear how much of a say, if any, individuals will have about controlling all of that.

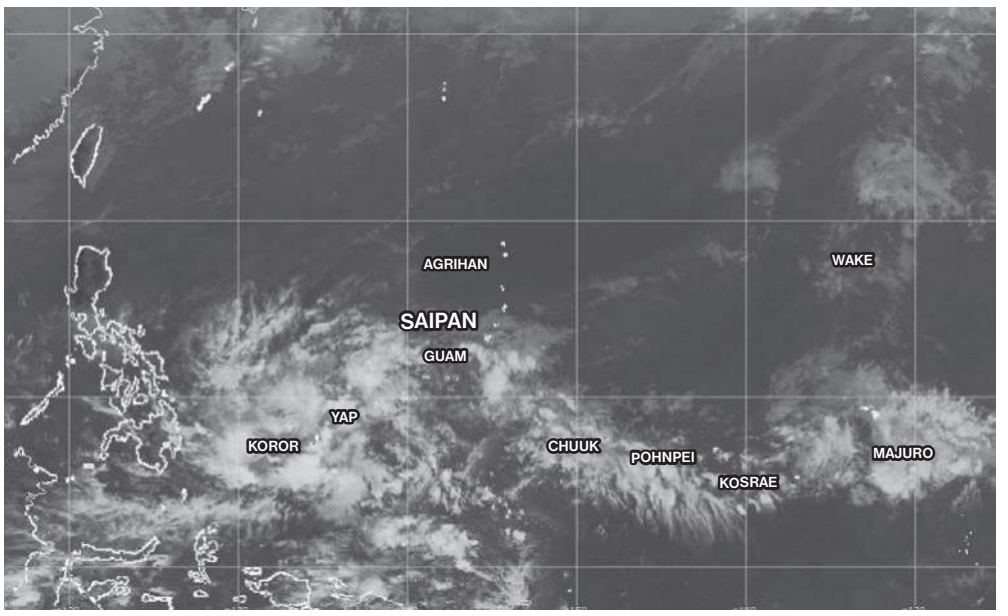
The cookie is dead. Long live the cookie.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.
87º 77º	86º 76º	86º 76º	87º 77º	87º 77º

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 9:02 AM, TUESDAY, MARCH 9, 2021

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite imagery and observations show showers increasing over Guam and Rota. Broke zones into three parts as models still show somewhat drier air pushing across Rota tonight.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	86 | 78 °F
Palau	Overcast	86 | 77 °F
Yap	Partly Cloudy	90 | 70 °F
Chuuk	Mostly Cloudy	86 | 80 °F
Pohnpei	Overcast	86 | 80 °F
Kosrae	Rain	87 | 80 °F
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	84 | 81 °F

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:28 AM	6:26 PM
Thursday	6:27 AM	6:26 PM
Friday	6:27 AM	6:26 PM
Saturday	6:26 AM	6:26 PM
Sunday	6:25 AM	6:27 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	4:09 AM	3:43 PM	-
Thursday	4:57 AM	4:38 PM	-
Friday	5:41 AM	5:31 PM	-
Saturday	6:21 AM	6:21 PM	-
Sunday	6:58 AM	7:10 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Rain	71 | 67 °F
Beijing	Clear	56 | 30 °F
Hong Kong	Scattered Clouds	69 | 65 °F
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	79 | 65 °F
London	Mostly Cloudy	56 | 45 °F
Los Angeles	Clear	79 | 54 °F
Manila	Partly Cloudy	87 | 74 °F
Melbourne	Clear	86 | 57 °F
Miami	Mostly Cloudy	79 | 68 °F
New York	Overcast	60 | 44 °F
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	47 | 37 °F
Paris	Light Rain Mist	57 | 51 °F
Pusan	Mostly Cloudy	45 | 30 °F
Rome	Partly Cloudy	60 | 45 °F
Salem	Overcast	49 | 43 °F
San Francisco	Clear	62 | 47 °F
Seoul	Scattered Clouds	41 | 26 °F
Tokyo	Mostly Cloudy	51 | 32 °F
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	64 | 43 °F

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
6:54 AM	High Tide	1.72
12:24 PM	Low Tide	1.04
5:12 PM	High Tide	1.65
12:28 AM	Low Tide	-0.24

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
- ❏ Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
- ❏ Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ❏ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- ❏ Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 5, 2021

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	6:55am	7:35am	1, 5, 6
UA117	7:00am	7:40am	4

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	6:55am	9:50pm	1, 5 via Guam

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 5

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	5:10am	5:51am	1, 5, 6
UA174	5:15am	5:56am	4

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	10:55pm	5:56am+1	3 via Guam
UA184/174	10:40pm	5:51am+1	5 via Guam

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:40pm	4:30am+1	5
UA184	10:55pm	4:45am+1	1, 3

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 9, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat
3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

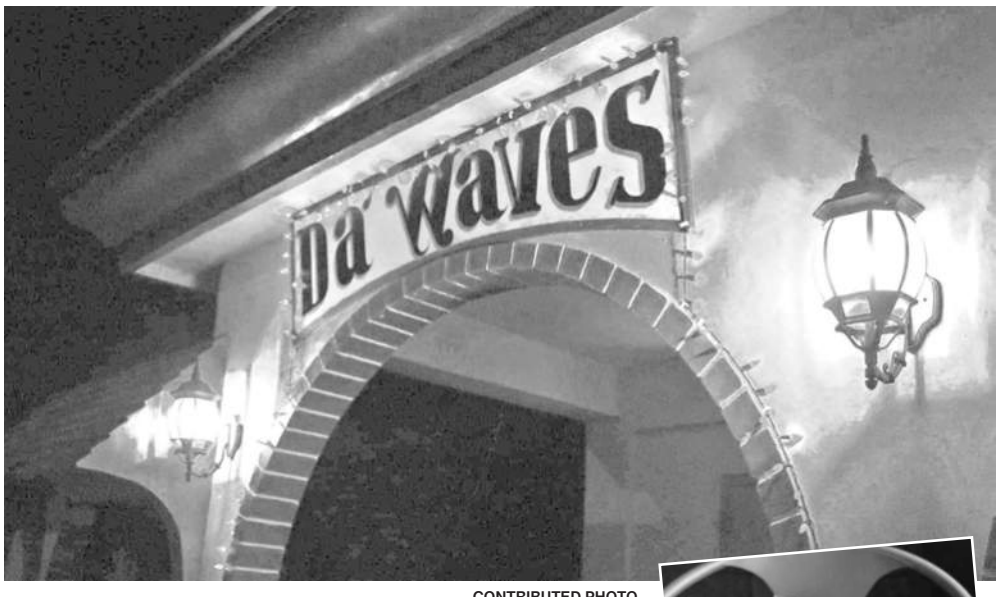
SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

Business



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Da Waves Tavern is open Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 6pm-10pm, and Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, 6pm-2pm.

Da Waves Tavern rises on Rota

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Since opening on Rota last Nov. 26, Da Waves Tavern has been as busy as a restaurant and watering hole could be on a small island in the middle of the Pacific.

Chef John C. Berrocal, a graduate of Le Cordon Bleu culinary school in Paris, France, said the local community has embraced Da Waves Tavern and he and his staff couldn't feel more at home on Rota.

"The welcome has been amazing. We are totally in shock as we never thought that it was going to be this busy in a such a small island like Luta," he said, referring to Rota by its indigenous name.

From just Da Waves before opening, Berrocal attached the word "tavern" to the restaurant's name to kind of tie it to his former highly successful restaurant on Saipan, which was Roque's Tavern in San Roque.

"The name is the same from being a bar and now a tavern. Da Waves Tavern is a place where you can drink and eat good food," he said.

So far, Da Waves Tavern has been a culinary oasis on Rota and Berrocal said the bestsellers are their pizzas, clams vongole, Tavern Burger, Italian fries, carbonara, lomo saltado, and seafood saltado.

"We are a very distinct restaurant with our own concept, which is Italian-Peruvian and local cuisine," he said.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Da Waves Tavern serves Italian-Peruvian and local cuisine.

As far as COVID-19 concerns, Da Waves Tavern abides by all the guidelines of the COVID-19 Task Force. Berrocal said they're also fortunate that despite Rota's proximity to Guam, the island has been COVID-19 free.

"The COVID-19 on the island has been zero. The pandemic has affected our operations a little bit in the limited hours of operation. But other than that, it's not much and it's been business as usual," he said.

Berrocal invites everyone on the island and from neighboring Saipan and Tinian to visit Da Waves Tavern. "We are a pretty good-size restaurant with outdoor capacity for 85 people."

Currently, they're only open for dinner but are planning to open for lunch soon.

Da Waves Tavern's Tavern Burger.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Da Waves Tavern is located in Songsong, Rota. It's open Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 6pm-10pm, and Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, 6pm-2pm. For more information or for reservations, call 788-4919. You can also check them out through their Facebook page: Da Waves Tavern.

COVID bill to deliver big health insurance savings for many

WASHINGTON (AP)—Several million people stand to save hundreds of dollars in health insurance costs, or more, under the Democratic coronavirus relief legislation on track to pass Congress.

Winners include those covered by "Obamacare" or just now signing up, self-employed people who buy their own insurance and don't currently get federal help, laid-off workers struggling to retain employer coverage, and most anyone collecting unemployment. Also, potentially many more could benefit if about a dozen states accept a Medicaid deal in the legislation.

Taken together, the components of the coronavirus bill represent the biggest expansion of federal help for health insurance since the Obama-era Affordable Care Act more than 10 years ago. "Obamacare" not only survived former President Donald Trump's repeated attempts to tear it down but will now get a shot of new life.

Consider a couple of examples: A hypothetical 45-year-old making $58,000 now gets no aid under the ACA. With the bill, they'd be entitled to a $1,250 tax credit, or 20% off their premiums, according to the Congressional Budget Office. A 64-year-old making $19,300 already gets generous subsidies that reduce premiums to $800 a year. But with the bill, that person would pay no premiums for a standard plan.

Because health insurance is so complicated, consumers are going to have to do their homework to figure out if there's something in the bill for them. And health care benefits are not like stimulus checks that can be blasted out. There will be a lag as government agencies, insurers and employers unpack the bill's provisions.

Bubba Gump Shrimp to temporarily close

After nearly five years of serving the CNMI community, Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. Saipan will be temporarily closing their doors in Garapan this Saturday, March 13.

"Since March 2020 we have all experienced the devastating effects that COVID-19 has had on our community, our economy and our business organizations. We have explored many options to counter the negative impact this pandemic has had on us all in many ways. Unfortunately, we find that we must make some further difficult decisions and are faced with closing another restaurant temporarily," said Robert H. Jones, chairman and CEO of Triple J Enterprises, Inc., which is the local franchisee of Bubba Gump Shrimp Co.

Triple J will continue to monitor the economy and reopen when market conditions improve and intends to rehire staff when it does.

"We value our employees and their dedication to our company and are extremely proud of their perseverance during such unprecedented times. Our incredible team truly made an impact not only in our restaurant, but in the community, taking part in pandemic relief efforts and volunteering their time when our community needed it the most. Our priority is to provide support to all affected employees to make this transition as smooth as possible and work closely with them to avail of all qualifying relief programs," Jones said.

MARK RABAGO

The Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. Saipan location in Garapan is the 16th international Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. to open its doors back in May 2016.

Jones added, "We wish to express our sincere gratitude to all our great customers for their patronage this past five years, and the fine cooperation and assistance we have received from HS Lee Construction Company, our landlord."

The Garapan location is the 16th international Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. to open its doors back in May 2016. Triple J announced the temporary closure of Tony Roma's and Capricciosa in July 2020.

The community is encouraged to visit Bubba Gump for their favorite southern comfort seafood and shrimp dishes, for dine-in or take-out, before their doors close on Saturday.

Surf Club Restaurant and Great Harvest Bakery & Café will continue daily operations. ***(PR)***

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
31,802.44	3,821.35	12,609.16
0.97%	0.54%	2.41%
+306.14%	-20.59%	-310.99%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	1.3045	Hong Kong Dollar	7.7664	Russian Ruble	73.5225
British Pound	0.7224	Indian Rupee	72.8085	Singapore Dollar	1.3491
Canadian Dollar	1.2653	Japanese Yen	109.1830	South Korean Won	1119.76
Chinese Yuan	6.4306	Malaysian Ringgit	4.0924	Swiss Franc	0.9357
Euro	0.8436	New Zealand Dollar	1.4038	Taiwan Dollar	27.9327
		Philippine Peso	47.7073	Thailand Baht	30.8610

Nation

Biden's big relief package a bet govt can help cure America

WASHINGTON (AP)— President Joe Biden wants America to know that he's from the government and he's here to help.

That sentiment became a well-worn punchline under Ronald Reagan and shaped the politics of both parties for four decades. Democrat Bill Clinton declared the era of big government over in the 1990s, Barack Obama largely kept his party in the same lane and Republican Donald Trump campaigned on the premise that Washington was full of morons, outplayed by the Chinese and others.

But Biden is now staking his presidency on the idea that the government can use his $1.9 trillion coronavirus relief plan not only to stop a pandemic and jobs crisis but also to catapult the country forward to tackle deep issues of poverty, inequality and more. The massive bill could be approved by Congress as early as Tuesday.

"When I was elected, I said we were going to get the government out of the business of battling on Twitter and back in the business of delivering for the American people," Biden said after the huge bill passed the Senate on Saturday. "Of showing the American people that their government can work for them."

Taken together, provisions in the 628-page bill add up to one of the largest enhancements to the social safety net in decades, pushing the country into uncharted territory.

Besides stopping the pandemic and jumpstarting hiring, money in the rescue package — now awaiting final approval in the House — is supposed to start fixing income inequality, halve child poverty, feed the hungry, save pensions, sustain public transit, let schools reopen with confidence and help repair state and local government finances. And Biden is betting that the government can do all of this with the speed of a nation mobilizing for war without touching a tripwire of inflation.

AP

President Joe Biden takes his face mask off before speaking during an event to mark International Women's Day, Monday, March 8, 2021, in the East Room of the White House in Washington.

"People have lost faith government can do good for them," says Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, who spoke daily with Biden while ushering the bill through the Senate last weekend. Now, as vaccines become more available and other changes take place, "people are going to see that government actually is making their lives better — which is how Americans used to think of it, and we've gotten away from it."

Republicans say Americans have plenty of reason to be skeptical, calling the American Rescue Plan excessive and wasteful. They warn the sweeping package will run up the national debt to precarious new heights after $4 trillion in aid has already been provided.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell argues against the package as missing the moment — too big at a time when the virus is showing signs of easing and the economy is poised to come "roaring" back.

Instead of working across the aisle toward unity, as Biden has promised, McConnell says Democrats are "ramming through what they call 'the most progressive domestic legislation in a generation,'" quoting the White House chief of staff.

"They explained their intent very clearly: to exploit this crisis as 'a tremendous opportunity to restructure things to fit our vision,'" McConnell says. This is the first COVID-19 bill that had zero support from Republicans in the House or Senate.

Biden's bet, more than others in modern politics and economics, is full of questions.

Can the federal money push economic growth above 6% for the first time since Reagan in 1984? Will the 9.5 million lost jobs quickly return? Will inflation surge? Will the national debt spook voters in next year's midterm elections? Biden has placed the biggest of markers on the theories of the 20th Century British economist John Maynard Keynes that the government can stimulate a dormant economy back to health.

Sweeping in scope, Biden's plan largely relies on existing health care and tax credits, rather than new programs, but it expands that standard fare in ambitious new ways that are designed to reach more people who are suffering in an unprecedented time.

"We haven't done this before," said Syracuse University economics professor Len Burman, a co-founder of the Tax Policy Center. "If it actually does work the way it does in theory and the economy is back at full employment in a year, that would be amazing. It would save a lot of hardship and suffering."

But Burman also has misgivings about the design of Biden's package because it distributes direct payments and other benefits to almost every household in the United States, rather than directing the money to the poor and to businesses and organizations most damaged by the pandemic and ensuing shutdowns.

"It kind of reminded me of this idea when I was in grad school of helicopter money — which was basically dropping money from the air and seeing if it raised incomes," he said. "The money could have been better targeted."

Final passage of the bill is expected this week — before expanded unemployment benefits are set to expire mid-March. But Biden's signing celebration will just be the start. His administration will have to show that the funds can be spent effectively and efficiently, helping those in need while giving the broader public enough confidence to awaken growth through hiring and spending.

Child tax credit expansion sets up showdown with GOP

WASHINGTON (AP)— The massive coronavirus relief plan making its way to President Joe Biden's desk includes a plan to temporarily raise the child tax credit that could end up permanently changing the way the country deals with child poverty.

It also sets up a potential political showdown with Republicans over an issue that Democrats believe could drive significant wins for the party in the 2022 midterm elections and beyond.

The American Rescue Plan, expected to receive final approval this week, temporarily raises the child tax credit, now at a maximum of $2,000, to as much as $3,600 per child annually. The plan also expands the credit so it's fully available to the poorest families, instead of restricting it based on the parents' tax liability. And it will be paid out in monthly installments, to offer families struggling during the pandemic a more consistent lifeline.

In the short term, said Democratic strategist Josh Schwerin, the expansion of the tax credit and other immediate aid included in the $1.9 trillion bill provide real evidence of Democratic action to help middle-class families.

"One of the good things politically about this bill is the direct and obvious impact it's going to have on American families in a way they can see and feel in an immediate way," he said.

The legislation gives families up to $3,600 annually for each child under age 6 and as much as $3,000 for those up to 17. The credit starts to phase out for individual parents earning more than $75,000 and couples making $150,000. The legislation also expands the credit to millions of families currently making too little to qualify for the full benefits.

The benefit is aimed at providing support to millions of families affected by the coronavirus pandemic, with parents forced to cut down on work or give up their jobs entirely to take care of children after losing access to childcare. Democrats have embraced an analysis that found the proposal would cut child poverty among Black families by more than 50%, and by 45% overall.

Fiery chants for justice from marchers at Chauvin trial

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)— Hundreds of people gathered Monday outside the fortified courthouse for the first day of the trial of a former police officer charged in George Floyd's death, with chants of "No justice, no peace!" and speakers imploring the jurors to "do the right thing."

Many in the crowd carried banners, some reading "Justice for George Floyd" and "Convict Killer Cops."

As the judge and attorneys convened high above in an 18th-floor courtroom—with jury selection almost immediately stalling over the state's effort to add a third-degree murder charge against Derek Chauvin—organizer DJ Hooker lamented the concrete barriers, chain-link fencing, barbed wire and razor wire that has gone up around the courthouse, along with National Guard troops and police standing guard behind.

"We ain't in that cage over there. What do they call it, the First Amendment zone? The Freedom Zone, I call it a cage," said Hooker, an organizer with Twin Cities Coalition for Justice 4 Jamar, which was formed after the 2015 death of Jamar Clark in a confrontation with Minneapolis police. "Look what they did to our beautiful downtown. They turned this into a war zone."

Later, he ridiculed talk of the Chauvin trial as "the trial of the century," noting the widely seen citizen video of Floyd's arrest and saying all the jury needs to do is "do the right thing."

Then he led the crowd in chants of "The whole world is watching!"

The protesters later marched around downtown. The protest featured several speakers that ranged from activists of various organizing groups to the parents of Black men killed by police.

Sam Martinez, an organizer with Twin Cities Coalition for Justice 4 Jamar, said organizers plan similar protests for dates that coincide with significant points in Chauvin's trial, including opening statements, closing arguments and the verdict.

Martinez said the biggest turnout likely will be on the day of the verdict.

"When the people know that there needs to be justice, they'll come out," Martinez said. "We trust in the people, we know they'll back us up."

Asia

Myanmar protesters defy curfew

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—Demonstrators in Myanmar's biggest city came out Monday night for their first mass protests in defiance of an 8 p.m. curfew, seeking to show support for an estimated 200 students trapped by security forces in a small area of one neighborhood.

The students and other civilians earlier took part in one of the many daily protests across the country against the military's seizure of power last month that ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

The military government also placed a major curb on media coverage of the crisis. It announced that the licenses of five local media outlets—Mizzima, DVB, Khit Thit Media, Myanmar Now and 7Day News—have been canceled.

"These media companies are no longer allowed to broadcast or write or give information by using any kind of media platform or using any media technology," it said on state broadcaster MRTV.

All five had been offering extensive coverage of the protests, often with livestreaming video online. The offices of Myanmar Now were raided by the authorities Monday before the measure was announced.

DVB said it was not surprised by the cancellation and would continue broadcasting on satellite TV and online.

"We worry for the safety of our reporters and our staff, but in the current uprising, the whole country has become the citizens' journalists and there is no way for military authorities to shut the information flow," Executive Director Aye Chan Naing told The Associated Press.

The government has detained dozens of journalists since the coup, including a Myanmar Now reporter and Thein Zaw of AP, both of whom have been charged under a public order law that carried a penalty of up to three years in prison.

The night's street protests began after police cordoned off part of Yangon's Sanchaung neighborhood and were believed to be conducting door-to-door searches for those who fled attacks by security forces to seek shelter in the homes of sympathetic strangers.

News of their plight spread quickly on social media, and

» Media outlets ordered shut

people poured into the streets in neighborhoods all over the city to show solidarity and in hopes of drawing some of the pressure off the hunted protesters. On some streets, they constructed makeshift barricades with whatever was at hand.

In the Insein district, they spread across road junctions, singing songs, chanting prodemocracy slogans and banging objects together.

The diplomatic missions of the United States, Britain, Canada and the European Union all issued statements urging the security forces to allow the trapped people to return safely to their homes. Although all have been sharply critical of the Feb. 1 coup and police violence, it is unusual for such diplomatic statements to be issued in connection with a specific, ongoing incident.

"There is heightened tension caused by security forces surrounding Kyun Taw Road in Sanchaung Township, Yangon. We call on those security forces to withdraw and allow people to go home safely," said the U.S. Embassy's statement.

By midnight Myanmar time, there had been no reports of clashes between police and protesters, although security forces chased crowds, harassed residents watching from windows, and fired stun grenades. They also were some reports of injuries from rubber bullets.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is following developments in the Sanchaung district where "many of those trapped are women, who were peacefully marching in commemoration of International Women's Day," U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

"He calls for maximum restraint and urges for the safe release of all without violence or arrests," Dujarric said, and for respect of the rights to freedom of assembly and expression for peaceful demonstrators voicing "their hopes and desires for the future of their country."

Guterres also called the occupation of a number of public hospitals in Myanmar by security forces "completely unacceptable," the U.N. spokesman said.

The nighttime hours have become increasingly dangerous in Myanmar. Police and army units routinely range through neighborhoods, shooting randomly to intimidate residents and disrupt their sleep, and making targeted arrests.

Security forces shot and killed two people in northern Myanmar during the day, local media reported.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Taiwan President Tsai visits naval base amid Chinese threats

KEELUNG, Taiwan (AP)—Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen visited a naval base on Monday to thank sailors and marines for their dedication to protecting the island amid renewed threats from China, vowing not to allow the loss of "any single inch" of territory. In remarks during her visit to the 131st Flotilla in the northern port of Keelung, Tsai said the bravery of servicemembers "demonstrated the determination of Taiwan's national armed forces to defend the sovereignty of our country." "We can't yield any single inch of our land," Tsai said. Tsai's tough talk comes amid stepped-up Chinese military exercises and near-daily incursions by Chinese military aircraft into airspace close to Taiwan. China claims the island, which broke away amid civil war in 1949, as its own territory and threatens to use its massive military to bring it under Beijing's control.

PH police kill 9 in raids on suspected rebels

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine police backed by military forces killed nine people over the weekend in a series of raids against suspected communist insurgents, with authorities saying the suspects opened fire first. Others, however, said those killed were unarmed activists. Police said Monday that all of those killed were associated with "communist terrorist groups" and had shot at officers while being served search warrants. The suspects died while being taken to hospitals, police said. Police served at least 24 search warrants, mostly for illegal firearms and explosives, in a number of locations in Cavite, Laguna, Batangas and Rizal provinces over the weekend. Police said six other suspects were arrested and nine escaped. The killings immediately drew condemnations by left-wing and rights groups, which demanded an independent investigation into what some described as executions of legitimate activists being carried out under the guise of a crackdown on rebels who have been fighting a Marxist insurgency for the past five decades.

World

Pope weighed Iraq virus risk

ABOARD THE PAPAL PLANE (AP)—Pope Francis said Monday he weighed the risks of a high-profile trip to Iraq during the coronavirus pandemic, but said he decided to go ahead with it after much prayer and belief that God would look out for the Iraqis who might get exposed.

Francis described his decision-making process en route home from Iraq amid concerns that his four-day visit, which featured oftentimes maskless crowds in packed churches, singing—could result in the spread of

» But believes God will protect

infections in a country with a fragile health care system and a sustained surge in new cases.

Francis said the idea of a trip "cooks over time in my conscience," and that the pandemic was the issue that weighed most heavily on him. Francis has experienced close-up the ravages of COVID-19 in Europe given Italy has had one of the worst outbreaks in the world, with the official death toll soon to hit 100,000.

"I prayed a lot about this. And in the end I took the decision freely," Francis said. "It came from inside. I said 'He who makes me decide this way will look after the people.'"

"I took the decision this way, but after prayer and knowing the risks," he said.

Francis on Monday wrapped up the first-ever papal trip to Iraq, which was aimed at bringing hope to the country's marginalized Christian minority while boosting relations with the Shiite Muslim world.

AP

Pope Francis, front right, bids farewell upon concluding his visit to Iraq at Baghdad airport, Iraq, Monday, March 8, 2021.

At every turn of his trip, Francis urged Iraqis to embrace diversity—from Najaf in the south, where he held a historic face-to-face meeting with powerful Shiite cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, to Nineveh to the north, where he met with Christian victims of the Islamic State group and heard their testimonies of survival.

But at every turn he also experienced crowds that often ignored social distancing norms and mask requirements, even though the Vatican and Iraqi church officials had promised anti-virus measures would be enforced.

Francis, the Vatican delegation and traveling media were vaccinated against COVID-19, while most Iraqis haven't been. Infectious disease experts had questioned the wisdom of such a trip given Iraq's latest cases are being spurred by the more infectious strain that first appeared in the U.K.

Iraq recorded 4,068 infections Saturday, up significantly from infection rates at the start of the year. In total. 13,500 people have died among a total 720,000 confirmed infections.

While Francis said he prayed on the decision, it was clear the globe-trotting pope of the peripheries was also getting antsy being cooped up in the Vatican for more than a year. He said he hoped he soon might be able to resume public audiences at the Vatican, which have been suspended for months, and hinted at a possible trip to Lebanon.

"After these months of imprisonment, and truly I felt a bit imprisoned, this for me is to live again," he said of the chance to be close to his flock. "To live again because it's touching the church, the holy people of God."

UN urges Yemen's rebels to allow access to injured migrants

CAIRO (AP)—The U.N. migration agency on Monday urged Yemen's Houthi rebels to allow access to dozens of migrants injured in a fire at an overcrowded detention center in the capital.

Some 900 migrants, most of them from Ethiopia, were detained Sunday at a facility inside the Passports and Naturalization Authority complex in Sanaa, which is controlled by the rebels, when the fire took place, the International Organization for Migration said.

More than 170 migrants were injured, including over 90 seriously, the IOM said. At least eight people were announced dead Sunday, but the actual death tall remained unconfirmed since IOM did not have access to injured migrants at hospitals, it said.

"As many migrants are in critical condition, their health needs must be an urgent priority. We are facing challenges accessing the injured due to an increased security presence in the hospitals," said Carmela Godeau, the agency's regional director for the Middle East and North Africa region.

A spokesman for the rebels was not immediately available to comment.

Despite its yearslong conflict, Yemen remains a transit point for tens of thousands of migrants desperate to find jobs as housekeepers, servants and construction workers in Saudi Arabia.

A U.N. official estimated Sunday that there were over 700 migrants at the center, most of whom were arrested in the northern province of Saada while trying to cross into Saudi Arabia.

The cause of the fire, which broke out at a hangar near the main building of the detention center, remined unclear, the IOM said. There were more than 350 people in the hangar area at the time of the fire, it added.

Some 138,000 migrants embarked on the arduous journey from the Horn of Africa to Yemen in 2019, but this number decreased drastically to 37,000 last year because of the coronavirus pandemic. Over 2,500 migrants reached Yemen from Djibouti in January, according to IOM.

Good Housekeeping

Spinach stuffed shells

Jumbo shells stuffed with spinach and mozarella and ricotta cheeses sit in a bed of marinara sauce. TNS

By GRETCHEN MCKAY
PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

Have you been feeling a little cooped lately up with all the crummy weather? Me, too, and I'm guessing that's why I've been obsessed with adding fresh, leafy greens to every meal for the past couple of weeks.

Greens speak of spring, and spring in turn means warmer weather. Also, don't we all need to eat more vegetables?

If you'd rather work fresh greens into a cheesy entree, this easy pasta dish should hit the spot. It features fresh spinach mixed with a trio of Italian cheeses that is then stuffed into oversized pasta shells, with a generous amount of marinara on top and bottom to make it saucy. It's easy, nutritious and super filling.

I used a type of conchiglionio rigati (Italian for seashell) from the Pennsylvania Macaroni Co. in the Strip District. The luxe Pastificio Di Martino brand is a bit more expensive than the jumbo-sized shells found in traditional grocery stores, but worth it. I also took the shortcut of using jarred marinara sauce instead of making my own, because I wanted dinner on the table as fast and efficiently as possible.

This recipe makes enough filling for two small or one large pan of shells. For an easy make-ahead-meal, stick one in the freezer, wrapped tightly in plastic and again with foil, for later.

SPINACH AND CHEESE STUFFED SHELLS

PG tested

- 2 (16-ounce) bags fresh spinach (around 6 cups)
- Salt to taste
- 12 ounces large pasta shells
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- Pinch or two of red pepper flakes
- 1 (24-ounce) container whole milk ricotta
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese, plus 2 tablespoons for garnish, divided
- 8 ounces shredded mozzarella
- 1 egg, beaten
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 to 3 cups marinara or tomato sauce

Bring a large pot of generously salted water to a boil. Fill a large bowl with ice water and set next to stove.

Blanch the spinach in batches for 15 to 20 seconds, until just wilted, and, using tongs, transfer to the ice water. Then drain. Squeeze out excess water with a clean dish towel, finely chop and place in a large dry bowl.

Bring the spinach water back to a boil and add the pasta shells. Cook according to package instructions until al dente, around 10 to 12 minutes. (If the cooked shells are too soft, they will be difficult to stuff.)

Drain and toss with olive oil to keep them from sticking. Set aside to cool.

To spinach, add minced garlic, red pepper flakes, ricotta cheese, Parmesan and mozzarella. Stir to combine, then add the beaten egg and stir again to combine until well blended. Season with salt and pepper.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Pour enough marinara or tomato sauce into the bottom of a large baking pan to cover, about ¾ to 1 cup. (You can use two smaller pans if you want to freeze one for later.)

Fill each cooked shell with a generous tablespoon of the spinach and cheese filling. Arrange in a single layer in the baking dish on top of sauce. Drizzle or spoon more tomato sauce on top (make it as saucy as you like) and cover the dish with foil.

Place in oven and bake for 30 minutes. Remove from oven, and sprinkle with the remaining 2 tablespoons of grated Parmesan.

Serves 6.

This curried rotisserie chicken salad gets its crunch from toasted almonds and diced Granny Smith apples. TNS

Crunchy curried chicken salad

By GRETCHEN MCKAY
PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

Light but still satisfying, chicken salad is the ultimate girls' lunch menu item. But it also can be dressed up with fruits and spices to create a quick and easy weeknight meal.

It's easier still if you use a grocery store rotisserie chicken, which somehow always seem juicier than the birds I roast at home and takes just a few minutes to pick and chop into bite-sized pieces.

I like to use a mix of mayonnaise and plain Greek yogurt for the dressing, and always stir in a teaspoon or two of curry powder to add a little pizazz.

This recipe also includes raisins that have been softened in a little hot water, chopped Granny Smith apple and the peppery bite of scallions. Toasted sliced almonds are a must, both for the added crunch and nutty flavor.

If you feel like adding chopped dried apricot, fresh grapes, dried cherries or other dried fruits, go right ahead.

I serve the chicken salad on fresh baby salad greens, but it also can be scooped on top of a thick piece of crusty bread for an open-faced sandwich, or stuffed into a roll or between two slices of bread.

The salad keeps in the fridge for up to three days, which means if there's leftovers, you can spoon it onto crackers to enjoy as a mid-morning snack. At least I did, and it made the work day that much tastier.

CRUNCHY CURRIED CHICKEN SALAD

PG tested

- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- ¼ cup plain Greek yogurt
- 2 teaspoons curry powder, or more to taste
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1½ heaping cups cubed or shredded rotisserie chicken
- 3 scallions, white and green parts, chopped
- ½ large green apple, such as Granny Smith, diced
- ⅓ cup raisins, soaked in hot water to soften
- ¼ cup toasted sliced almonds
- Handful of fresh, leafy lettuce
- 4 thick slices crusty bread for an open-face sandwich, or 8 slices for a regular sandwich

In a medium bowl, stir together the mayonnaise, yogurt and curry powder. Then add a generous pinch of salt and a good grind of black pepper. Taste and adjust seasonings.

Add cooked chicken, scallions and apple and stir until well combined. (If the salad isn't creamy enough, add a little more mayo or yogurt.) Fold in raisins and toasted almonds. Stir to combine well.

Serve chicken salad tucked between two slices of bread as a sandwich or spooned on top of fresh mixed greens as a salad.

Serves 4.

Life & Style

Explosive Harry, Meghan interview reverberates across globe

LONDON (AP)—Prince Harry and Meghan's explosive TV interview divided people around the world on Monday, rocking an institution that is struggling to modernize with claims of racism and callousness toward a woman struggling with suicidal thoughts.

During the two-hour appearance with Oprah Winfrey, Harry also revealed the problems had ruptured relations with his father, Prince Charles, and brother, Prince William, illuminating the depth of the family divisions that led the couple to step away from royal duties and move to California last year.

The palace has not yet responded to the interview, in which Meghan described feeling so isolated and miserable inside the royal family that she had suicidal thoughts and said a member of the family had "concerns" about the color of her unborn child's skin.

The family member was not Queen Elizabeth II or Prince Philip, according to Harry, sparking a flurry of speculation about who it could be.

Leaders around the world were asked about the interview, and citizens of many countries had an opinion.

In Accra, Ghana, Devinia Cudjoe said that hearing that a member of the royal family was worried about the color of the skin of an unborn child was insulting to people of the Commonwealth, the grouping of Britain and its former colonies that is headed by the queen.

This image provided by Harpo Productions shows Prince Harry, left, and Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, speaking about expecting their second child during an interview with Oprah Winfrey.
JOE PUGLIESE/HARPO PRODUCTIONS VIA AP

"That is pure racism," Cudjoe said. "(The) Commonwealth is supposed to foster unity, oneness amongst black people, amongst white people. But if we are hearing things like this … I think that is below the belt."

In Nairobi, Kenya, Rebecca Wangare called Meghan "a 21st- century icon of a strong woman. She has faced racism head-on."

Asma Sultan, a journalist in Karachi, Pakistan, said the interview "is going to tarnish the image of the royal family."

"There is so much controversy ever since Diana's death, so it is new Pandora box which is opened up," she said.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson refused to comment on the interview, praising the queen but saying that "when it comes to matters to do with the royal family the right thing for a prime minister to say is nothing."

Asked whether U.S. President Joe Biden and his wife Jill had any reaction to the interview, White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki said Meghan's decision to speak about her struggles with mental health "takes courage" and "that's certainly something the president believes in."

But she said she wouldn't offer additional comment on the situation "given these are private citizens, sharing their own story and their own struggles."

The allegations are especially damaging because many observers hoped Harry and Meghan, who is biracial, would help the tradition-bound monarchy relate to an increasingly multicultural nation. In the early days of their marriage, Harry and Meghan joined William and his wife, Catherine, in projecting a glamorous, energetic image for the young royals.

That partnership was severed when Harry and Meghan left the country, saying they wanted to earn their own living and escape what they called intrusive, racist coverage by the British media.

But the interview brought that criticism into the palace itself, with the couple directing allegations of racism at an unidentified member of the royal family.

Meghan said that when she was pregnant with her son, Archie, Harry told her that the royal family had had "concerns and conversations about how dark his skin might be when he's born."

Harry confirmed the conversation, saying: "I was a bit shocked." He said he wouldn't reveal who made the comment. Winfrey later said Harry told her the comment didn't come from Queen Elizabeth II or Prince Philip, his grandparents.

Meghan, 39, acknowledged she was naive at the start of her relationship with Harry and unprepared for the strictures of royal life. A successful actress before her marriage, she said she bridled at the controlling nature of being royal, squirming at the idea that she had to live on terms set by palace staff. This was compounded by the fact that the staff refused to help her when she faced racist attacks from the media and internet trolls, she said.

Academy Museum to honor Sophia Loren, Haile Gerima at gala

The Academy Museum of Motion Pictures is assembling a star-studded cast for its opening gala in September. Italian screen legend Sophia Loren and independent filmmaker Haile Gerima will be honored with special awards, and Tom Hanks, Annette Bening and Bob Iger are being saluted for their efforts to raise $388 million for the long gestating museum, the organization said Monday.

The gala will be held on Sept. 25 as the kick-off to a week of celebrations leading up to the museum's opening to the public on Sept. 30.

Bill Kramer, the director and president of the Academy Museum, said in a statement that the museum is "committed to celebrating and championing the work of film artists, scholars and professions through our exhibitions, screenings, programs, collections and now, through our annual gala."

Gerima is acclaimed for his portraits of Black urban life in films like "Bush Mama" and "Ashes & Embers." The Ethiopian-born filmmaker will be receiving the inaugural Vantage Award, recognizing artists who have contextualized or challenged dominant narratives in film. Loren will be getting the Visionary Award for artists whose work has advanced the art of cinema. ***(AP)***

Michelle Obama, Mia Hamm among 9 chosen for Women's HOF

SENECA FALLS, N.Y. (AP)—Former first lady Michelle Obama and soccer star Mia Hamm have been chosen for the National Women's Hall of Fame as part of a Class of 2021 announced Monday that also includes former PepsiCo Chief Executive Indra Nooyi and retired Brig. Gen. Rebecca Halstead.

Halstead commanded in combat as the first female commanding general at the strategic level in Iraq.

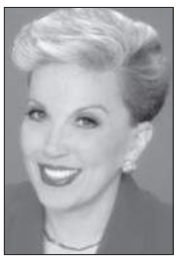
NASA mathematician Katherine Johnson, who died last year, also will be inducted during an Oct. 2 ceremony, along with the late author Octavia Butler, Native American artist Joy Harjo, abolitionist Emily Howland and artist Judy Chicago. The National Women's Hall of Fame inducts a new class every other year in Seneca Falls, the site of the first women's rights convention.

As in other years, this year's ceremony will be in person, hall officials said, but tickets will not be available until April or May, when there is a better understanding of COVID-19 protocols for live events.

Brother is alarmed by teen sister's dangerous choices

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR ABBY: A few weeks ago, my 14-year-old sister snuck out and had sex with a boy she met on Snapchat. I know this because my distraught mother decided to tell me.

My sister lied to my parents repeatedly about it, but later, when they went through her phone, they found explicit images that a girl her age should never have. Furthermore, after they confiscated her phone, she acquired a new one from a friend and continues to message boys through Snapchat. She continues to lie to my parents when they ask her if she's communicating with anyone.

She has been hanging around a toxic group of girls at school, and she's very impressionable. She isn't a bad person, but all this lying has left me confused and upset. What can I do to help her?

HER WORRIED BROTHER IN GEORGIA

DEAR BROTHER: The age of consent in Georgia is 16. Do your parents know the identity and age of the person your sister met on Snapchat? The inappropriate pictures your parents discovered on her phone could be considered child pornography, and there are laws against it.

It's very important that your sister understand how dangerous what she has been doing is. Because the peer group she has chosen to follow is undesirable, it would be better if your sister was removed from that influence and home-schooled or transferred to a different school. Please suggest this to your parents.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My best friend, "Betsy," died suddenly a week ago. She was only 58, and I am devastated. She was the most upbeat, positive person I have ever known.

A year ago, a new neighbor, "Claudia," moved across the street. I befriended her and introduced Claudia to Betsy a couple of months ago. They met twice and texted each other a few times. I was pleased, thinking we could have a girls' night out once in a while.

After Betsy died, I heard Claudia has been telling people her "best friend" had died. The day before, she told me she barely knew Betsy. Claudia also said that at least now she didn't have to share me!

I am appalled that this woman is trying to co-opt my grieving for my dearest friend and make it her own. How do I deal with this?

SORROWFUL IN WASHINGTON

DEAR SORROWFUL: I am sorry for the loss of your best friend. People who knew you and Betsy know how close you were. Claudia may have said what she did in order to gain sympathy or attention.

Your grief is your own. No one can steal it from you. Claudia may be insecure or jealous of the closeness you shared with Betsy. Now that you know what kind of person Claudia is, act accordingly.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Do you feel the words "cool" and "perfect" are way overused and should be retired indefinitely?

CURIOUS IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR CURIOUS: No, but if you do, I'm perfectly cool with it.

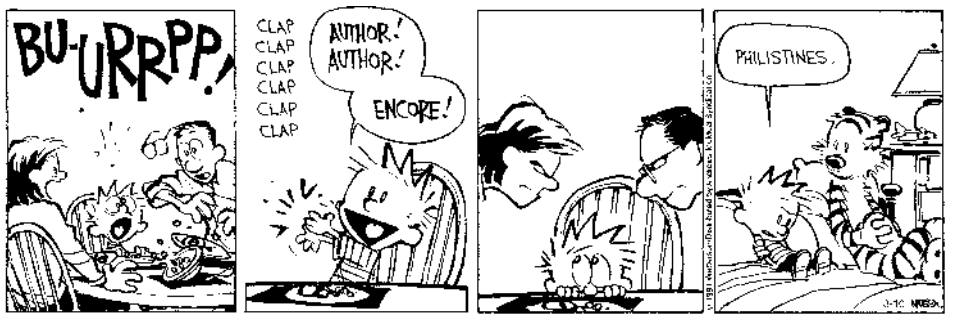
How about overused words like "huge," "awesome" and "epic"? And is everything and everyone truly "AMAZING"? See what you have started? Somebody hand me a thesaurus.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

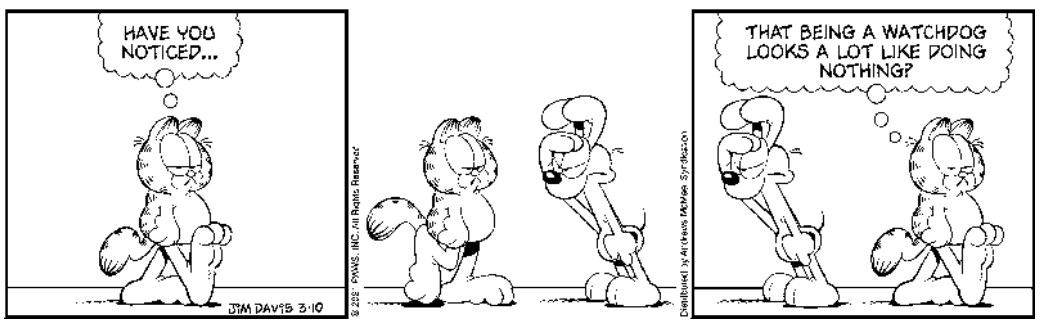
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis



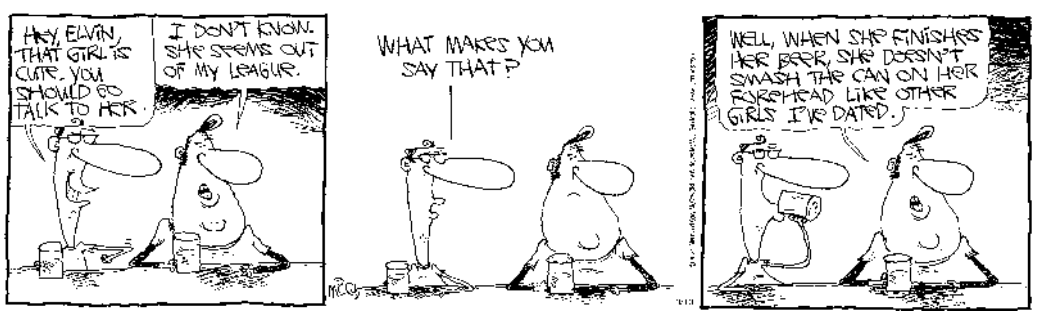
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

CAN I USE YOUR OFFICE? I'M GONNA BE BURNING THE MIDNIGHT OIL.
SURE, HONEY. I KNOW IT'S A TIGHT DEADLINE, BUT YOU'LL GET IT DONE.
YOU SOUND LIKE ME.
I NEED A COFFEE EVERY TWENTY MINUTES UNTIL I START LEVITATING.
SERIOUSLY, IT'S JUST UNCANNY.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


HEY, ELVIN, THAT GIRL IS CUTE. YOU SHOULD GO TALK TO HER.
I DON'T KNOW. SHE SEEMS OUT OF MY LEAGUE.
WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT?
WELL, WHEN SHE FINISHES HER BEER, SHE DOESN'T SMASH THE CAN ON HER FOREHEAD LIKE OTHER GIRLS I'VE DATED.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Beloved
5 Pen tip
8 Bar fight souvenir
12 "Suffice — say ..."
13 Tempe sch.
14 Actor Cronyn
15 On "E"
17 Mimicked
18 Wash off
19 Marsh birds
21 Eye drop
24 Dict. info
25 Promises
28 Set down
30 NFL's Jaguars, on scoreboards
33 Carte lead-in
34 Rosy-cheeked
35 Mine yield
36 Danson of "The Good Place"
37 Human rights lawyer Clooney
38 Tennis match parts
39 Not on
41 Take five
43 Suits
46 Family girl
50 Work units
51 Rope contest
54 Lacking slack
55 Botanist Gray
56 Maui garlands
57 $ dispensers
58 Shrill bark
59 Sea eagle

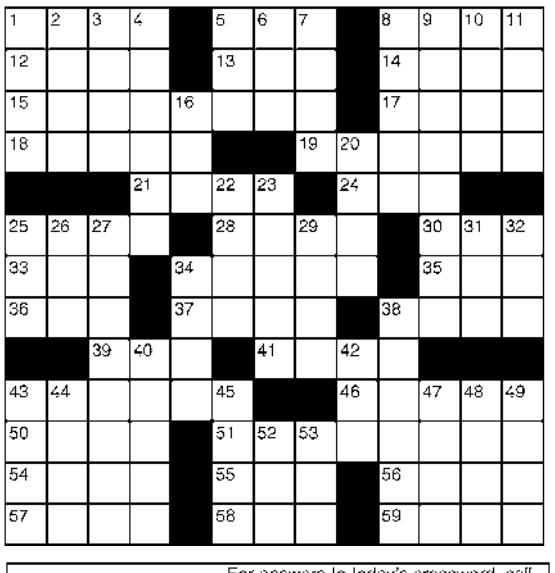
DOWN

1 French perfume brand
2 Needle case
3 Envelope abbr.
4 Perches
5 Pester
6 "Patience — virtue"
7 Obama predecessor
8 Stock unit
9 Nickname for "coffee"
10 Prayer ender
11 Cincinnati team
16 Service charge
20 Vortex
22 Reunion attendee
23 Doppler device
25 Cistern
26 Flamenco cheer
27 Sticky clump on a shoe bottom
29 Not busy
31 Illustrations
32 Ballot markings
34 Huck's transport
38 Repress
40 Pugilist's weapons
42 — -cone
43 Alpha follower
44 Part of Q.E.D.
45 Remain
47 Pitcher
48 Abel's brother
49 Celtic tongue
52 Dos Passos trilogy
53 Opening

Solution time: 23 mins.

B	O	S	C	■	T	I	E	■	G	A	L	T
O	S	■	O	■	A	N	N	■	A	S	I	A
T	U	R	N	B	L	A	D	■	Z	E	S	T
■	■	■	V	I	C	■	O	P	I	A	T	E
B	I	P	O	D	■	A	R	O	N	■	■	■
O	K	A	Y	■	I	M	S	O	G	L	A	D
T	E	■	■	E	L	M	E	R	■	O	V	A
H	A	M	S	A	L	A	D	■	T	O	E	S
■	■	■	A	R	C	N	■	B	O	■	C	H
S	K	U	I	I	S	■	C	A	M	■	■	■
P	O	■	O	■	I	R	O	N	C	I	A	D
F	I	A	N	■	O	U	R	■	A	C	N	F
C	A	N	S	■	N	E	D	■	T	U	E	S

Yesterday's answer 3-10



STUMPED? For answers lo today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Olivia Wilde, 37; Carrie Underwood, 38; Jon Hamm, 50; Sharon Stone, 63.

Happy Birthday: You'll face last-minute changes and indecisiveness this year. Having a clear-cut image of what you want to achieve will help you navigate your way to the higher moral ground when too many choices tempt you. Stabilization, security and information will help you maintain integrity, a good reputation, and a job or interest that has the potential to raise your standard of living. Your numbers are 8, 15, 21, 29, 36, 38, 44.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Connect with people who have something to offer. Set up interviews, send out your resume or take action to ensure that you make a difference. How you handle uncertainty and your relationships with others can alter the outcome. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* You'll face opposition if you question what others do or you suggest something that isn't popular. Figure out the best way to get others to support what you are trying to accomplish, or prepare to move forward alone. ✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Participate, but first, be sure to back a group that shares your beliefs. Your time is precious, and getting your facts straight will make a difference to what you are willing to contribute. Make decisions for the right reason. ✪✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Put your unique spin on whatever you do, and you will succeed. Be willing to invest the time and effort into your ideas instead of helping someone else get ahead. Learn from the experience you have gained while working for others. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Evaluate your relationships with others before making promises you may not want to keep. If a change someone makes is questionable, don't be afraid to walk away. Set your standards high, and follow the path that makes you feel good. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Put any pent-up anger you are feeling to rest. Make the necessary adjustments to soothe your soul and to send you in a preferred direction. Partnerships based on shared interests and beliefs will encourage you to be your best. Romance is favored. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Live life your way. Learn from the experience you gain watching others. Take the initiative to educate yourself about the things you want to pursue before investing money or precious time. Fix up your surroundings to meet your needs. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Look for unique ways to set up your workspace or add comfort to your home. Incentives that will stimulate your imagination and creativity will help you bring about positive change. Distance yourself from emotional issues you cannot change. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Restrain yourself from flipping between truth and emotional desires. Don't bank on someone being honest with you. Gather facts and verify the information before you take action. Use intelligence instead of emotion, and you'll avoid being misled by someone's persuasive charm and persistence. ✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Pay more attention to money matters, job and responsibilities. Don't be afraid to make a change if something isn't working correctly. Putting up with a dysfunctional situation will stand between you and your success. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Make changes at home that will make your life easier, but don't overspend unnecessarily. In most cases, convenience is attainable using what you already own more efficiently. Recycle, reuse and redefine your lifestyle, and everything else will fall into place. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Reach out to someone you want to collaborate with, and you will both benefit from the encounter. An idea you have will spark an interest in something that encourages a positive change in how you live and how you handle your finances. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are intuitive, persistent and convincing. You are forceful and engaging.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		3	8	9			
	2				3		
6	3				5	7	
6							1
2							3
4	9	1		7	8	5	
	7	7		4	1		
	8	9	3	5	2		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 3/10

©2012 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

7	2	9	8	5	3	4	1	6
6	3	8	4	9	1	5	7	2
1	5	4	2	7	6	9	8	3
4	7	3	5	1	8	6	2	9
9	8	2	7	6	4	1	3	5
5	6	1	3	2	9	7	4	8
2	1	5	6	8	7	3	9	4
8	4	7	9	3	5	2	6	1
3	9	6	1	4	2	8	5	7

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

PUT IT IN THE DISHWASHER Solution: 7 letters

E	F	I	N	K	S	I	H	W	A	S	H	L	O	C
P	R	E	N	I	A	R	T	S	C	O	O	P	E	R
I	A	E	D	E	G	N	O	P	S	T	A	C	K	Y
T	G	R	L	R	S	S	A	H	S	I	D	F	B	S
C	I	E	A	T	Y	P	P	K	D	R	A	I	N	T
H	L	T	K	C	T	D	O	R	A	I	N	L	A	A
E	E	R	O	A	K	O	E	O	A	S	J	L	S	L
R	E	E	O	N	B	D	B	F	N	Y	U	A	D	V
E	C	V	C	U	W	G	O	L	A	T	H	E	R	A
D	U	O	R	O	N	E	W	J	A	M	G	T	A	S
N	A	C	P	I	E	A	L	P	U	S	U	H	O	E
A	S	S	T	F	T	S	S	A	L	G	D	G	B	L
L	P	T	F	E	R	I	N	S	E	K	N	I	S	C
O	U	O	R	E	N	I	A	T	N	O	C	L	L	Y
C	C	P	L	A	T	E	P	A	O	S	Y	O	T	C

© 2021 Andrews McMeel Syndication www.wonderword.com 3/10

Bake, Bins, Boards, Bottle, Bowl, Coffee, Colander, Container, Cook, Cover, Crystal, Cubs, Cutting Board, Cycle, Dish, Drain, Dry, Fill, Fork, Fragile, Glass, Grater, Jars, Jug, Knife, Lather, Lids, Light, Mugs, Pitcher, Plate, Pots, Powder, Rack, Rinse, Sauce, Scooper, Scrub, Sink, Soap, Spatula, Sponge, Spoon, Spray, Stack, Strainer, Toys, Vase, Wash, Water, Whisk

Yesterday's Answer: Kingmaker

Treasuries 22 through 43 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

Exciting 2nd half awaits NBA, but virus may still have a say

By BRIAN MAHONEY
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

AP
Milwaukee Bucks forward Giannis Antetokounmpo celebrates with Denver Nuggets center Nikola Jokic during the first half of basketball's NBA All-Star Game in Atlanta, Sunday, March 7, 2021.

While LeBron James was largely resting through the All-Star Game, the Brooklyn Nets were adding another piece for a run at his title.

With James still near the top of his game and the Nets on top of the league in scoring, it's easy to envision a coast-to-coast NBA Finals when a champion is crowned in July.

But, when most teams resume play Thursday — the same date last season was suspended — the leaders in the Eastern Conference might be doing so without their two best players.

As proven again when Philadelphia's Joel Embiid and Ben Simmons had to sit out the All-Star Game, the coronavirus might still have a say on this season, making uncertainty a sizable obstacle in the title chase.

"You're playing every other day. You don't know when you're going to have practice time. You don't know as far as what the restrictions and with COVID and things of that nature if you're going to have all your guys," James said. "So it's very challenging for all teams, not just us."

The bigger problem for the Lakers has been the absence of All-Star Anthony Davis because of a right calf injury. The defending champions have struggled without him, dropping six of eight to end the first half and falling 3 1/2 games behind surprising West leader Utah.

The Nets have also been without an All-Star, though they've hardly missed Kevin Durant because of the brilliance of James Harden and Kyrie Irving. Blake Griffin agreed to join them Sunday night after the six-time All-Star cleared waivers after securing his buyout from Detroit.

"We're fortunate to be able to add a player of Blake's caliber to our roster at this point in the season," Nets general manager Sean Marks said.

Brooklyn comes out of the break a half-game behind Philadelphia. Embiid has been a force this season and become a leading MVP candidate, but he and Simmons were ruled out of the All-Star Game on Sunday morning because they got haircuts from a barber who tested positive for COVID-19.

They may not be cleared to return until the weekend, after the Sixers have played their first two games of the second half.

"We start on the road, back-to-back games, with one practice. That's a challenge in itself, right?," Sixers coach Doc Rivers said. "Then, obviously, not having those guys, that's a lot of points, our two best defenders. So, obviously, it would hurt."

Teams are used to it after a first half in which the unavailability of players and coaches because of health and safety protocols forced 31 games to be called off. For every team, the first big test of the second half is the coronavirus one that will determine who is good to go upon returning from break.

Once that's finished, teams can look ahead to a busy and exciting stretch run. With many clubs bunched in the standings and another play-in tournament opening up additional paths to the postseason, even teams that weren't as sharp as they hoped in the first half have reason for hope.

That includes teams such as Miami and Boston — last season's Eastern Conference finalists — plus Dallas and Golden State, all at or barely above .500 but perhaps just one hot streak from a nice leap up the standings.

Or maybe Milwaukee, which was running away with the best record in the East last year when the season stopped but has been inconsistent this season, can discover its old form. The Bucks will be fearsome again if Giannis Antetokounmpo shoots anywhere near the way he did in the All-Star Game, when he went 16 for 16 en route to MVP honors.

"I've got to keep working hard and I've got to keep enjoying the game of basketball, and hopefully more important things can come, and hopefully my goal is to be a champion one day," the two-time regular-season MVP said. "Hopefully we can hold the big trophy."

A number of teams could have a shot. The Lakers may have looked like a solid favorite to repeat when the season started, but Davis' health throws that into question.

Perhaps the Jazz can capitalize. They were the team whose coronavirus issues caused the season to stop last March 11. Now, they have three All-Stars and a league-leading 27-9 record.

"It's definitely been rewarding but at the end of the day we're not here to celebrate and act like we've done something and it's only March," Donovan Mitchell said. "I think we've got to continue to get better."

Hawks forward Cam Reddish has procedure on right Achilles

ATLANTA (AP)—Atlanta Hawks forward Cam Reddish had a nonsurgical procedure on Monday after missing six games with soreness in his right Achilles.

Reddish was placed in a walking boot following the procedure at Emory Sports Medicine Clinic. His status will be updated in about one week.

Reddish, a second-year player from Duke, is averaging 11.2 points in 26 games, including 21 starts. He is only one of a long list of injured players that helped to derail the first half of Atlanta's season, leading to the firing of coach Lloyd Pierce on March 1. Nate McMillan was named interim coach.

Atlanta won its final two games under McMillan before the All-Star break and is 11th in the Eastern Conference at 16-20.

On Friday, the Hawks announced forward De'Andre Hunter will miss at least two more weeks but has stepped up his rehabilitation from right knee surgery. He had surgery on Feb. 8.

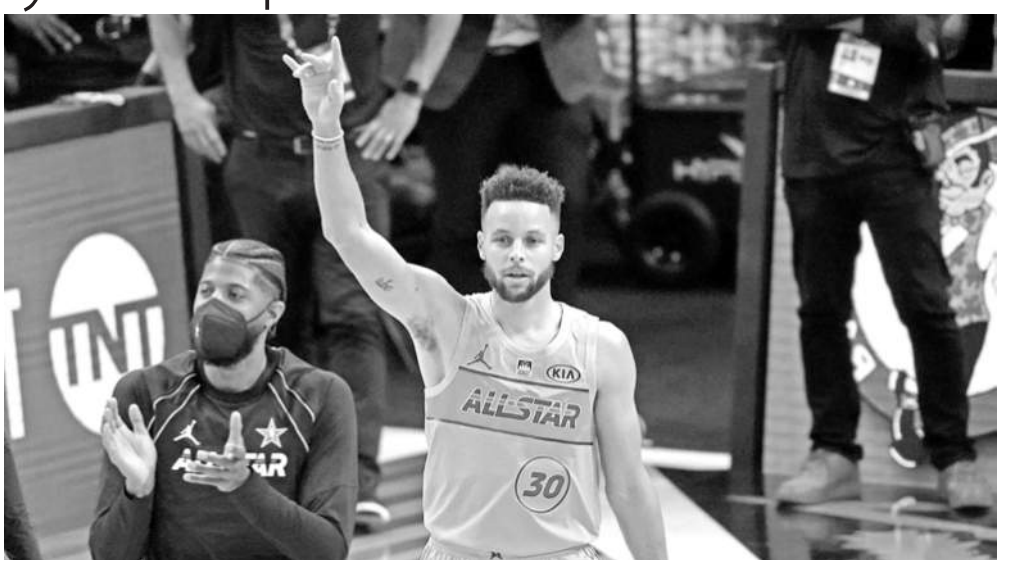
NBA: Nobody tested positive for COVID-19 at All-Star Game

The NBA's mini-bubble in Atlanta for the All-Star Game apparently worked.

No players, coaches or game officials tested positive for COVID-19 while in Atlanta, the NBA said Monday after the final tests were processed and results were returned to the league and the teams involved.

That includes Philadelphia's Joel Embiid and Ben Simmons, a pair of All-Stars who had to miss the game and left Atlanta early after being flagged through contact tracing. A barber both saw before going to Atlanta tested positive, and that meant Embiid and Simmons were potentially exposed to the virus. By league policy this season they couldn't play Sunday night.

"All players, coaches, and game officials were tested for COVID three times after arriving in Atlanta, including a final test immediately prior to last night's All-Star Game," the league said in a statement Monday. "Each of those tests returned a negative result, confirming no one on the court for last night's events was infected."



AP
Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry celebrates after basketball's NBA All-Star Game in Atlanta, Sunday, March 7, 2021.

Embiid and Simmons have continued to return negative tests as well. It's still unclear if they will be eligible to play when Philadelphia opens its second-half schedule in Chicago on Thursday.

"So far, so good as far as their testing," 76ers coach Doc Rivers said. "They feel great. They both obviously wanted to play. We're disappointed. Both of them, their biggest concern would be if they could play the first two games when we get back. So we don't know the answer to that yet. That's going to be really important for us. It would be tough to start the second half of the year and not have either one."

All players and coaches who were involved in the game arrived in Atlanta on Saturday and left late Sunday following the game. Team LeBron, captained and selected by LeBron James, defeated Kevin Durant's Team Durant 170-150.

Some players questioned why the game needed to be played during the pandemic, and those questions persisted Sunday after it was revealed Embiid and Simmons could not participate. But the league and NBA Commissioner Adam Silver insisted throughout the planning for the game that players would be safe in Atlanta.

And just as was the case last summer in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, where the NBA held the end of its regular season and then the entire 2020 playoffs in a bubble at Walt Disney World, the plan worked.

"Big shoutout to everybody that made this happen, to the players for coming down and participating, playing," Phoenix All-Star Chris Paul, who also serves as president of the National Basketball Players Association, said after the game. "There's always a lot of back and forth on these different decisions, but once guys get here, I think they're grateful for it." ***(AP)***

Cowboys, Prescott finally agree on $160M contract

By SCHUYLER DIXON
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER

AP
In this Oct. 11, 2020, file photo, Dallas Cowboys quarterback Dak Prescott throws a pass in the first half of an NFL football game against the New York Giants in Arlington, Texas.

The Dallas Cowboys and Dak Prescott have finally agreed on the richest contract in club history, two years after negotiations first started with the star quarterback.

The team said the agreement was reached Monday. It's a $160 million, four-year contract with $126 million guaranteed and an NFL-record $66 million signing bonus, according to a person with knowledge of the deal who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because details weren't announced.

The deal comes a day before a deadline to put the franchise tag on Prescott for a second straight year at a salary cap charge of $37.7 million. The new contract will lower that cap hit.

Prescott played on a $31.4 million franchise tag in 2020 before his season ended with a compound fracture and dislocation of his right ankle in Week 5.

At $40 million per season, Prescott is second in the NFL in annual salary to Kansas City's Patrick Mahomes, who is at $45 million annually in a $450 million, 10-year deal that could eventually exceed $500 million in value. Houston's Deshaun Watson is third at $39 million annually.

The 27-year-old Prescott is the fourth Dallas player to get a $100 million contract after Tony Romo, the injured quarterback he replaced and ultimately sent into retirement, and two teammates in defensive end DeMarcus Lawrence and receiver Amari Cooper.

Lawrence was among plenty of teammates reacting to the news on social media, tweeting, "HE'S BAAAAAACCCKKKK," while Prescott's brother, Tad, posted a photo of the two hugging after Prescott got the call about the deal.

Before the gruesome injury against the New York Giants in October, Prescott had started every game since the beginning of his rookie year after two years later won his first playoff game while reaching his second Pro Bowl.

Negotiations on a new contract started the following offseason, when Prescott was going into the final year of a four-year contract that paid him a total of about $4 million as a fourth-round pick. That included $2 million in the final season.

Prescott got a 1,500% raise with his first franchise tag, which locked in another increase for a second tag despite the salary cap going down because of the NFL's revenue dip in the pandemic.

With a new contract, the Cowboys will get salary cap relief they're expected to need with the cap falling from $198 million to possibly as low as $180 million. The cap has risen about $10 million per season for most of the past decade.

Even before Prescott's injury, the Cowboys started slowly in coach Mike McCarthy's first season last year. But Prescott was still leading the NFL in yards passing for the league's No. 1 offense. Those numbers plummeted as Dallas lost its first four games without Prescott, falling to 2-7 on the way to a 6-10 finish.

Romo injured his back during the 2016 preseason.

Prescott won NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year honors while leading the Cowboys to the No. 1 seed in the NFC and

Judge tosses suit over 'race-norming' in NFL dementia tests

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—A federal judge on Monday dismissed a lawsuit that challenged "race-norming" in dementia tests for retired NFL players, a practice that some say makes it harder for Black athletes to qualify for awards that average more than $500,000.

A hearing had been set for Thursday. The judge instead ordered the NFL and the lead lawyer in the overall $1 billion settlement to resolve the issue through mediation. That process would appear to exclude the Black players who sued.

"We are deeply concerned that the Court's proposed solution is to order the very parties who created this discriminatory system to negotiate a fix," said lawyer Cyril V. Smith, who represents ex-players Kevin Henry and Najeh Davenport, and filed a notice to appeal the dismissal late Monday. "The class of Black former players whom we represent must have a seat at the table and a transparent process."

The demographic factors that doctors consider during testing for dementia often include race. If so, lawyers say, the testing assumes that Black athletes start with worse cognitive functioning than white people—which means it's harder for them to show a deficit. Both Henry and Davenport were denied awards but would have qualified had they been white, according to their lawsuit.

Smith hoped to learn the scope of the problem through discovery as the lawsuit progressed, but the dismissal by Senior U.S. District Judge Anita B. Brody in Pennsylvania means he may never know how many Black players lost out on payments because of the practice.

He wants race-norming banned in NFL testing going forward, and cases reviewed if it was used in the past. The awards so far average more than $700,000 for the 203 ex-players diagnosed with moderate dementia and more than $500,000 for the 365 diagnosed with earlier-stage dementia.

NFL spokesperson Brian McCartney said the league is "pleased with the court's decision" and expects the mediation to address the judge's concerns about the issue.

Christopher Seeger, the lead lawyer for the more than 20,000 NFL retirees covered by the settlement, said the practice is not mandated under the deal but is left the discretion of the testing physicians.

"We have also opposed appeals filed by the NFL, supporting former players and physicians who found the application of such adjustments were inappropriate," Seeger said in a statement.

Brody has managed the litigation since 2011, when the first players sued alleging the NFL had long hidden what it knew about the link between concussions and brain injuries. The judge also steered secret negotiations that led to the surprise settlement of the case—long before discovery or trial—in 2013.

The settlement fund has so far paid more than $765 million to retired players for neurocognitive problems linked to NFL concussions, including about $335 million for dementia. Payments are expected to top $1 billion long before the 65-year settlement plan ends.

The dementia claims have proven especially contentious. Many of them have been denied, often after challenges from the NFL.

Seeger said he has seen no evidence of racial bias in the settlement program. Still, he said Monday, he is sorry it "opened a painful wound" for some.

Henry, who played for the Pittsburgh Steelers from 1993-2000, said his claim was denied although he suffers from headaches, depression and memory loss that leave him unable to hold a job.

Davenport, who played for the Steelers, Green Bay Packers and Indianapolis Colts from 2002-2008, said he suffered more than 10 concussions, including one that broke his eye socket and left him unconscious. He was approved for an award until the NFL appealed, asking that his test results be recalculated using racial norms, Smith said. By that measurement, his claim would fail.

Washington franchise tags All-Pro guard Scherff for 2nd time

By STEPHEN WHYNO
AP SPORTS WRITER

After Washington's playoff loss to Tampa Bay, Morgan Moses greeted Brandon Scherff with a simple message.

"That's not the last game I ever play with you," he said.

Moses' prediction is a big step closer to coming true now that Washington has placed the franchise tag on Scherff for a second year in a row. The team announced the move Monday night on the eve of the tagging deadline after the two sides couldn't come to terms on a long-term contract.

Scherff is coming off the first All-Pro season of his NFL career. The 29-year-old started 13 games at right guard and helping Washington make the playoffs for the first time since 2015, Scherff's rookie year after being drafted fifth overall.

Franchise-tagging Scherff again comes at a price of $18 million, a 20% raise from his 2020 salary. Scherff has started 78 games in his NFL career while developing a reputation for battling through injuries.

"I love it here," Scherff said on locker cleanout day. "I'm just looking forward to the offseason and hopefully I can sign my name to stay here."

Keeping Scherff is a major step toward continuity on the offensive line after re-signing center Chase Roullier to a four-year extension in January. Coach Ron Rivera said last month Scherff's status was among the topics being discussed with new general manager Martin Mayhew and executive vice president of football and player personnel Marty Hurney.

But there was little chance Washington would let Scherff walk. A year ago, the team moved on from Trent Williams and is still searching for his long-term replacement at left tackle.

MP United upsets foe in M-League

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

MP United Football Club gained a 2-0 record in the win-loss standings in Division A of the M-League Spring 2021 season after besting NMI U18 National B in their matchup last Sunday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

MP United nipped NMI U18 B, 2-1, in their matchup last Sunday behind Kwangjo Lim and Joshua Abragan who made a goal apiece.

MP United held the lead from the start behind Abragan who made his goal in the 19th minute of the match followed by Lim who fired his goal in the 49th minute. MP United amped up its defense to ensure its foe could not gain a come-from-behind victory.

In a last-ditch effort to turn the tables in their favor, NMI U18 B's Kaden Church fired the team's only point in the 80th minute but his efforts fell short.

DIVISION A
Paire 5, Old B Bank 0

Paire coasted to victory against Old B Bank behind Eric Barajas who scored three of the team's 5 goals.

NMI U18 A 5, The One 0

NMI U18 A bested The One behind Akira Kadokura who led the way with his three goals with help from Aloy Angeles and Kohtaro Goto who added one goal apiece.

Tan Holdings 1, Kanoa 0

Tan Holdings took the win over Kanoa with Martin Jambor making the only goal in the 65th minute.

DIVISION B
Bangladesh FC 3, Matansa 3

Bangladesh FC and Matansa went neck-and-neck with their match ending in a draw.

Shirley's 3, Women's NT 0

Shirley's outclassed Women's NT behind HoJin Woo, Hoin Ryu, and Jerry Tan who each contributed a goal each.

Saipan United 3, Island Star 0

In the final match in Division B, before Island Star forfeited in the second half, Saipan United's Saixian Bagsic landed two goals to secure the win while Guohua Hou added one.

KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
MP United's Razeff Altamirano intercepts the ball from an opponent during their match in the M-League Spring 2021 season last Sunday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

SANTOS

From Page 20

lands again. It's my intent to see what we can do to make baseball matter again. There hasn't been any leagues or baseball organizations for some time now," he said.

With the 2022 Pacific Mini Games to be hosted by the CNMI just right around the corner, Santos said the main focus will be to put together a team to represent the CNMI.

"Next year, there's the Pacific Mini Games that the CNMI will be hosting so our focus right now is to put together a team that will compete in the Games and also organize a league to get competition going," he said.

Back in 2011, the CNMI National Baseball Team made it to the playoffs in the 2011 Pacific Mini Games in Noumea and ended up in first place to win the gold medal in New Caledonia.

The Pacific Mini Games, which was originally scheduled for 2021, was pushed back as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic that put an indefinite pause on nearly all activities, sporting events were no exemption.

The Pacific Mini Games is now set to take place from June 17 to 25, 2022 in the CNMI.

COVID-19

From Page 20

through social media.

The 34-year-old said with COVID-19 vaccinations rolling out in the Bay Area, the situation in Daly City when it comes to COVID-19 has now improved.

"Pretty much it's getting better now. People are now getting their vaccines and hopefully in a few months, things will be back to normal," he said.

Demapan, who won an MVP in the 2017 JEM Company/Mobil Basketball League, said he moved to California to spread his wings and see what life has to offer him.

"I moved to California last October. It was not an easy decision being far away from my family. The reason why I decided to move is I would like to explore what opportunities I would have outside of Saipan."

Between adjusting to a new life in California and work as a caregiver, Demapan hasn't had much time playing his favorite sport since arriving in Daly City.

He did play some pick-up games last weekend and was surprised to find out that some of the players he went up against were not accustomed to physical play.

Demapan also said he couldn't see himself playing the guard position even though basketball players in California on average hover around 6 feet.

"Nah, can't see myself playing the 1 (point guard) or the 2 (off-guard) position, I'd rather play in the bottom."

The son of Raphael DeLeon Guerrero Demapan Sr. and Pat Damaso Demapan of Susupe said he misses Saipan a lot and hopes to come back for vacation before the end of the year.

"My message to my Demapan family is I really miss you guys. I can't wait to go back home and always remember that I love you guys and to all my friends back home especially to my Alii Blue Haus fam and Alvin 'General Bato' Alvarez, 'The Chief' will be back and I'll see you guys soon!"

Demapan said you can't really appreciate Saipan until you leave the island, as the simple life, year-round beaches, nice people around, and playing basketball everyday are now only cherished memories for him.

In all, Demapan won eight championships in local leagues on Saipan and was named to the mythical team several times.

MHS

From Page 20

KHS, which was once tied for first on the leaderboard with MHS, is now 12 behind after earning only 12 points from the preliminary and finals of both the 500m and 1,000m dash in the fourth leg of the series.

MHS started off strong taking first place in the preliminary round of the 500m dash. The Lady Dolphins completing the course in 3:26 to earn 5 points. MHS later lost the lead in the finals and placed second after submitting a time of 3:36 earning 3 points. MHS completed the 500m dash with a total of 8 points.

KHS lagged behind MHS in the preliminary round of the 500m dash by 2 seconds, completing the course in 3:29 at second place. The Lady Ayuyus redeemed themselves in the finals, beating MHS by 2 seconds with a time of 3:33 to bag first place.

Saipan Southern High School took third place in both the preliminary and final round of the 500m dash, completing the preliminaries at 3:34 and then the finals at 3:43.

MHS went on to sweep the 1,000m race taking first in both the preliminary and final round to gain 10 points overall. MHS completed the preliminary round of the 1,000m dash in 7:10 and completed the finals in 7:12.

KHS took second place in the preliminary round of the 1,000m dash with a time of 7:24, 14 seconds behind the Lady Dolphins. KHS fell short in the finals with a finishing time of 7:26 to place third.

The Lady Manta Rays finished third in the preliminary round of the race at 7:28, but picked up the pace in the finals to place second after submitting a time of 7:23.

During the long-distance race two weeks ago, MHS took the lead with a time of 56:09 to earn 5 points. KHS tailed MHS just a minute behind after submitting a time of 57:17 to earn 3 points. SSHS took last place to gain 1 point with a time of 58:24.

LET'S VACCINATE, CNMI!
• Registration EXPANDED to persons 50 years and older on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota!
• Continued registration Phase 1a & 1b!
• Register ONLINE at www.vaccinatecnmi.com
• Register over the PHONE by calling (670) 682-SHOT/(7468)
CNMI COVID-19 VACCINATION SCHEDULE 3/8/2021-3/15/2021
Vaccination varies by location and availability. We are currently not accommodating vaccine preference requests. LAST CALL: is the time the last vaccine will be given to a checked in patient.
SAIPAN
Monday 3/8 - 8am (open) to 5:30pm (last call)
• Dose 1: Available for Phase 1a & 1b
• Dose 2: For those vaccinated on 2/15
Tuesday 3/9 - 8am (open) to 5:30pm (last call)
• Dose 1: Available for Phase 1a & 1b
• Dose 2: For those vaccinated on 2/16
Wednesday 3/10 - 8am (open) to 5:30pm (last call)
• Dose 1: Available for Phase 1a & 1b
• Dose 2: For those vaccinated on 2/17
Thursday 3/11 - 8am (open) to 5:30pm (last call)
• Dose 1: Available for Phase 1a & 1b
• Dose 2: For those vaccinated on 2/18
Friday 3/12 - 8am (open) to 2:30pm (last call)
• Dose 1: Available for Phase 1a & 1b
• Dose 2: For those vaccinated on 2/19
Monday 3/15 - 8am (open) to 5:30pm (last call)
• Dose 1: Available for Phase 1a & 1b
• Dose 2: For those vaccinated on 2/22
LOCATION: CHCC - MCATS
AVAILABLE VACCINE: PFIZER
PARKING: Parking lot is located across the CHCC campus on Navy Hill Road.
TINIAN
Friday 3/12 - 9am (open) to 3pm (last call)
• Dose 1: Available for Phase 1a & 1b
Monday 3/15 - 9am (open) to 3pm (last call)
• Dose 1: Available for Phase 1a & 1b
• Dose 2: For those vaccinated 2/14 & 2/15
LOCATION: Tinian Health Center
AVAILABLE VACCINE: MODERNA
ROTA
Saturday 3/13 - 8am to 1pm
• Dose 1: Available for Phase 1a & 1b
Monday 3/15 - 8am to 1pm
• Dose 2: For those vaccinated on 2/15
LOCATION: Rota Health Center
AVAILABLE VACCINE: MODERNA
What to Bring
1. Vaccination ID (Located in confirmation email)
2. Government Issued ID (e.g, driver's license or passport)
3. Employee ID or latest paystub (Phase 1b only)
4. Insurance Card (If applicable)
5. DOSE 2 recipients must also bring their Vaccination Record Card (please make your appointment date even if you misplace your card)
VACCINATE CNMI CALL CENTER: (670) 682-SHOT / Mon-Sat 8am-8pm & Sunday 8am-1:30pm
VACCINATE CNMI WEBSITE: vaccinatecnmi.com
@cnmichcc

Exciting 2nd half awaits NBA, but virus may still have a say

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Sports

Cowboys, Prescott finally agree on $160M contract

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MHS breaks tie against KHS

KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
Marianas High School women paddlers in action during the 2021 PSS Interscholastic High School Canoe Series last Saturday in the waters off Kilili Beach.

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Marianas High School broke its draw with Kagman High School to officially take the top seat in the women's division of the 2020-2021 Public School System Interscholastic High School Canoe Series.

The Lady Dolphins have proven they are the team to beat following the fourth leg of the series race last Saturday in the waters off Kilili Beach. MHS prevailed over the Lady Ayuyus after earning an additional 18 points from the preliminary and finals of both the 500m and 1,000m races to bring its overall score to 39.

The MHS women's canoe team consists of Aleena Ada, Tianna Aldan, Xyrene Apostol, Tiara Cepeda, Margarette Dolotina, Haeven Hocog, Angella Maratas, and Mikaela Vergara.

Prior to last Saturday's race, MHS and KHS each held an overall score of 19 points on the leaderboard.

See MHS on Page 19

From hoops front-liner to COVID-19 front-liner

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Bartley Demapan in action while suiting up for TanHoldings in the 2017 JEM Company/Mobil Basketball League.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Bartley Demapan, right, poses with colleagues at an assisted care facility in Daly City, California.

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Bartley Demapan left for the U.S. mainland in October last year and thus began his journey from one of the best basketball front-liners in the CNMI to now a front-liner in the fight against COVID-19.

The 5'10" power forward is now a caregiver in an assisted living facility in Daly City, California and actually tested positive for the coronavirus in mid-January.

"The hardest part when I got positive with COVID-19 was being quarantined for 14 days. I couldn't see people and it made it more difficult for me because I can't really do much [during quarantine]," he told *Saipan Tribune* in a message

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Santos is new SBL president

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The Saipan Baseball Association has appointed Triple J's Jay Santos to serve as the association's new president.

Santos was officially appointed president during the first official board meeting for the new board members held last Monday. The new members include vice president George Norita Camacho, secretary Mark Flores, treasurer Bernard Cabrera, and board members Shine Tenorio, Pete Sablan, and Mark Toves.

According to Santos, as a baseball enthusiast for as long as he can remember, it was an honor to take up this new role.

"I'm very proud and very thankful to be voted on to the board for SBL and to be appointed as president by the board of directors. I'm very passionate about baseball [and] I have loved baseball basically my entire life," he said.

As president, Santos' main goal is to revive the beloved sport in the islands since the sport has been dormant since 2019.

"I truly want to see baseball flourish here in the is-

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Jay Santos, third from the left, was appointed to serve as the Saipan Baseball Association's new president following a board meeting last Monday.